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35369

JOHANN WOLFGANG
VON GOETHE

WEST-EASTERN DIVAN

IN TWELVE BOOKS

TRANSLATED BY

EDWARD DOWDEN

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Dedicated

to the English Goethe Society in memory of the translator, their President for twenty-two years.

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FOREWORD

GOETHE'S last important body of lyrical poetry, the *West-Eastern Divan*, is known to very few English readers. Many persons who are familiar with *Faust* and *Iphigenie* and the ballads have never opened this collection of verse. Even in Germany the *Divan*, as a whole, is much less known than it deserves to be. There are excuses to be pleaded for such neglect. The *Divan* is the product of Goethe's Indian summer of art-life, the rejuvenescence that came to him when he was sixty-five; and Indian summer has not the mighty ravishment of spring. In this the marks of old age are evident in thought and feeling, in style and diction. Few of its poems are quite equal individually to the most enchanting of Goethe's earlier lyrics; some are obscure even to German commentators; some require for their comprehension an acquaintance with Goethe's scientific ideas; the play of sexagenarian love-making in the book of Zuleika may be easily misunderstood.

Yet the *Divan* has had, as a whole, worthy

lovers and diligent students. Hegel placed it in the forefront of modern poetry; Heine learnt from it some of his lyrical manner, and wondered how such ethereal lightness as that of certain of its poems was possible in the German language. It was the subject of Düntzer's laborious scholarship—it was carefully edited by Loeper. No one has done so much to further a true appreciation of it as Conrad Burdach, and it was the subject of his *Festvortrag* at the General Meeting of the German Goethe Society in June 1896.

My husband, whose words I have here in part reproduced, says in continuation, in his Essay on "Goethe's West-Eastern Divan" (published in *Essays Modern and Elizabethan*, J. M. Dent & Sons): "I follow the guidance of that excellent "scholar and would aspire to come with a long "interval after Conrad Burdach.

"Having previously known the poems well, I "took with me last summer (1907) Loeper's edition "to Cornwall, and found that the game of trans-"lating Goethe's poetry into what aimed at being "English verse could be played on the wind-blown "cliffs of the Lizard, or in the shadow of some "fantastic cave of Serpentine, to the accompani-"ment of the Western waves.

"Even to fail in such a game was to enter into "the joy of *l'amour de l'impossible*.

"By slow degrees the whole of Goethe's silver

"arabesque work was transmuted into Cornish or "British tin. But the foiled translator had at "least to scrutinize every line of the original and "encounter every difficulty. And there were some "things so wise, so humane, so large in their serene "benignity, that they could not be wholly spoilt "even by a *traduttore*, who at least, as regards the "sense of each poem, strove not to be a *traditore*."

Lay readers who happen to have at hand that volume of Edward Dowden's Essays will do well to set aside this Foreword and seek their information about the *Divan* in that Essay as a whole. (I may mention here that it has been translated into German and published in the "*Erd-geist*" by Herr Paul Tausig of Vienna, translator of other writings of E. Dowden.)

For readers who cannot immediately refer to that Essay for information, if they need such, I give here for guidance some of the facts noted therein.

Goethe, from his early years, had been attracted to the poetry of the East. In the period of his youthful Titanism he had chosen Mohammed as the central figure of a dramatic poem, and had prepared himself for the task—never to be accomplished—by a study of the Koran.

In 1774 he informed his friend Merck that he had translated Solomon's "Song of Songs," "the most glorious collection of love-songs ever

fashioned by God." At Weimar he had translated one of the pre-Islamic poems of the Mu'allakât. He had been charmed by the Indian drama *Sakuntula*. Roses from Saadi's Garden and Jami's *Loves of Laila and Majnun* had introduced him to Persian poetry.

But it was not until after the publication of Joseph von Hammer's celebrated translation of the *Divan* of Hafiz in 1812 that the great German poet became, as it pleased him to imagine himself, a wandering merchant in the East, trucking his wares for those of Persian singers. He speaks of himself in this character in the dissertation which follows the verse of the *West-Eastern Divan*.

Is Goethe here only assuming an Eastern garb? No—he interprets in his own way a tendency of the time. The dominating classical influences, Greek and Italian, had waned and the new romantic literature was turning to the East. But the East of Goethe's imagination was not the East of the English poets who had looked Eastward: Southey, Shelley or Byron. From Byron's East, indeed, it was as remote as possible.

If he became a Romantic poet again it was in his own original and incomparable fashion. He felt profoundly hostile to the neo-Catholic party in the Romantic School, and in the *Divan* some shrewd thrusts are delivered against them by the old Pagan—the old Pagan who was in spirit more

religious than they—who had found, like Hafiz, the secret of being "*selig*" without being "*fromm*," which fact they never could admit nor understand.

Goethe turned to the East as to a refuge from the strife of tongues, as well as from the public strife of European swords. There the heavens were boundless, and God—the one God—seemed to preside over the sand-waste. There Islam—submission to God's will—seemed to be the very rule of life.

Before all else the merchandise which Goethe sought to purchase in the East was wisdom and piety and peace. These the Persian Hafiz had somehow found. Hafiz—gay but also wise—possessed of inward piety, did not pursue with zeal the outward practices of religion. The special quality, as Goethe perceived, of the Persian poet was his spontaneity; he was a true poetic fount: "wave welling after wave," like Goethe's own lyrical impulses in his earlier days, when song seemed to possess him rather than to be held in possession. There was another circumstance in common with them. Hafiz—a contemporary of our own Chaucer—had seen Timur, that scourge of God, sweep over Persia with his hordes and spread his conquests from Delhi to Damascus. Another Timur had arisen in Europe in the nineteenth century whose name was Napoleon.

Hafiz could not stay the conqueror's career; but at least he could give the world the joy of his Ghazels—so likewise Goethe.

With a strange and happy return upon him of the creative impulse of youth, urging him to swift and spontaneous jets of song, Goethe, in the early morning of 25th July 1814, started in his carriage from Weimar for the Rhine, Frankfurt and Wiesbaden. It was seventeen years since he had visited the scenes of his childhood and youth. Something of enchantment was added by this revival of the past to the Indian summer of Goethe's sixty-fifth year. (With an arrangement of certain pieces of the *West-Eastern Divan*, as indicated by Burdach, we can make out a kind of diary of the days of travel.)

The central motive of the poems is, in truth, love. First there is benignant charity extended to man as man; secondly, there is the charming relation of the old sage, poet and toper of wine to the boy-cupbearer, blooming in beauty, eager, as a boy may be, for wisdom, a relation which is lightly touched with humour; and last, there is the passionate love of man and woman exhibited in that ideal pair, Hatem and Zuleika.

During his visit to Frankfurt in the autumn of 1814 Goethe had the pleasure of personal intercourse with his friend, the Banker Willemer—

a man of generous heart and cultured intelligence. Marianne, his third wife—a woman of thirty—had bright social gifts and graceful cultivation, besides good humour and good sense. She became model for the Zuleika of the *West-Eastern Divan*, accepted her part as Zuleika with pride and pleasure, and played up to it with spirit, not without a sense of humour. The poems are poems of passionate love, but in the relation of Goethe and the good Marianne—a relation absolutely honest—the passion was born for the imagination merely, from a friendship which was of the happiest kind and which endured without interruption up to Goethe's last days, though after 1815 they never met again.

A few beautiful poems in the collection are Marianne's, *e.g.*, the song to the East Wind and the lovelier song to the West Wind (which every German singer knows in a beautiful musical setting).

The secret of Marianne's contribution to the *Divan* was well kept. She disclosed the facts not long before her tranquil death at the age of seventy-six.

Loeper, in his very elucidating Foreword to the *Divan*, notes that we find in it only the expression of the *active, living* side of the Orient; it shows forth the submission to God, but not the Fatalism

of the East. The urge in it is all towards joy, towards life, towards love, out of the depths of a serene and composed spirit.

From out the narrow room and narrow local surroundings of his home the poet takes his Hegira into the open world, into the freedom of Nature, as well as also into the freedom of human intercourse, in foreign towns, in the market-places, the taverns.

When the book came to light in 1819, in the epoch of the Byron *Welt-Schmerz*, it must have seemed as though it were a protest against all enmity towards the world and humanity—inasmuch as it is wholly free from all trace of self-torturings or of immersion in subjectivity. Goethe's world herein knows no such melancholy, for the pain and sorrow and the longing that it may contain have tangible objects and are never otherwise than sound and sane.

The calm Indian-summer radiance illumines it all.

E. D. D.

December 1913.

I

MOGANNI NAMEH

BOOK OF THE SINGER

Twenty years I let go past,
Joying in what life provides;
A train, each lovely as the last,
Years' fair as 'neath the Barmecides.

I

HEJIRA

NORTH and West and South up-breaking!
Thrones are shattering, Empires quaking;
Fly thou to the untroubled East,
There the patriarchs' air to taste!
What with love and wine and song
Chiser's fount will make thee young.

There, 'mid things pure and just and true,
The race of man I would pursue
Back to the well-head primitive,
Where still from God did they receive
Heavenly lore in earthly speech,
Nor beat the brain to pass their reach.

Where ancestors were held in awe,
Each alien worship banned by law;
In nonage-bounds I am gladly caught—
Broad faith be mine and narrow thought;

As when the word held sway, and stirred
Because it was a spoken word.

Where shepherds haunt would I be seen,
And rest me in oases green;
When with the caravan I fare,
Shawl, coffee, musk, my chapman's ware,
No pathway would I leave untraced
To the city from the waste.

And up and down the rough rock ways
My comfort, Hafiz, be thy lays,
When the guide enchantingly,
From his mule-back seat on high,
Sings, to rouse the stars, or scare
The lurking robber in his lair.

In bath or inn my thought would be,
Holy Hafiz, still of thee;
Or when the veil a sweetheart lifts
From amber locks in odorous drifts;
Ay, whispered loves of poet fire
Even the Houris to desire!

Would you envy him for this,
Or bring despite upon his bliss,
Know that words of poets rise
To the gate of Paradise,
Hover round, knock light, implore
Heavenly life for evermore.*

* Written 24th December 1814.

II

Pledges of Blessing

From a cornelian *Talisman*
Glad prosperous days the faithful gain;
If on an onyx ground it rest
To lips devout let it be pressed!
All that is ill away 'twill chase,
It shields you and it shields the place;
If the engraven word proclaim
With pure intention Allah's name,
To love and deed it will inflame;
And women, more than others can,
Will vantage by the Talisman.

Like symbols, but on paper set
By pen-craft, form the *Amulet;*
No narrow limit here will hem
The scribe as with the graven gem,
And pious souls may thus rejoice
In longer verses of their choice;
Such papers round the neck men wear
Devoutly as a scapular.

Behind the *Inscription* no hid meanings lie;
It is itself—the sentence tells you all;
And this once read will straightway make you call
With glad assent—" 'Tis I that say it, I."

Abraxas I will seldom bring!
Here chiefly the distorted thought
Some gloomy madness has begot
Would pass for the divinest thing.
If things absurd I speak, believe
'Tis an Abraxas that I give.

A *Signet-ring's* design craves studious care;
The highest sense in narrowest room must fit;
Yet if you plant a true idea there,
Graven stands the word and scarce you think
of it.*

III

Freedom of Spirit

Mine be the saddle still, to ride
While you in hut or tent abide!
And gay I gallop through wilds afar,
Nought o'er my bonnet save the star.

The stars were appointed by His voice,
Your guides over land and sea,
That the heart within you may rejoice
And your glance still heavenward be.†

* Written 1st January 1815. "Abraxas," a Gnostic amulet, often exhibiting brute and human forms combined.
† These four lines are versified from the Koran.

IV

TALISMANS

GOD'S very own the Orient!
God's very own the Occident!
The North land and the Southern land
Rest in the quiet of His hand.*

Justice apportioned to each one
Wills He Who is the Just alone.
Name all His hundred names, and then
Be this name lauded high! Amen.

Error would hold me tangled, yet
Thou knowest to free me from the net.
Whether I act or meditate
Grant me a way that shall be straight.†

If earthly things possess my mind
Through these some higher gain I find;
Not blown abroad like dust, but driven
Inward, the spirit mounts toward heaven.

* Versified from the Koran.
† Founded on a passage of the Koran.

In every breath we breathe two graces share—
The indraught and the outflow of the air;
That is a toil, but this refreshment brings;
So marvellous are our life's comminglings.
Thank God when thou dost feel His hand constrain,
And thank when He releases Thee again.*

V

Four Graces

That glad of heart the Arab should
Roam his wild spaces o'er,
Hath Allah for the general good
Granted him graces four.

The turban first, a braver gear
Than crowns of Emperors old;
And, for his dwelling everywhere,
A tent to raise or fold.

A sword that surelier can defend
Than crag or turret-height,
A little song, which maids attend
For wisdom or delight.

* Founded on a passage of the Gulistan of Saadi.

If from her shawl my singing spell
Draw flowers that fall my way,
What is her own she knows right well,
And still is kind and gay.

With flowers and fruits the sense to please,
I deck the board for you,
And would you add moralities,
I give them gathered now.*

VI

CONFESSION

WHAT is hard to cover? Fire!
Flame, the monster, will betray
By night its presence, smoke by day.
Hard to hide is love's desire;
However hushed and close it lies,
Love will leap forth from the eyes.
Hardest is a song to hide;
Under bushel 'twill not bide;
Did the poet sing it new,
It has pierced him through and through;
If pranked with pen, his eye approve it,
He would have the whole world love it,
Aloud he reads it joyously
To all—to plague or edify.†

* 6th February 1815. The first three verses derived from Chardin's Travels. Stanza 4, the flowers of the shawl of the beloved are transformed to poetic flowers.

† Frankfurt, 27th May 1815.

VII

Elements

Say, from how many an element
  True song should seek and suck its food,
Song, layfolks listen to content,
  And masters hear in gladdest mood?

Love, past all things of common rate,
  Be this our theme when we shall sing!
If love the verse should penetrate
  The sweeter will its music ring.

Then must the meeting glasses clink,
  While gleams the red wine circling round!
For those who love, for those who drink,
  With smiles the fairest wreaths are wound.

And next the clash of arms I name,
  The trumpet's blare must sound abroad.
So shall the hero, while in flame
  Leaps victory, know himself a god.

Last hate is indispensable,
  Ay, many a thing true poets hate;
Shall he who beauty loves, as well
  Foul things and loathsome tolerate?

Primeval matter—if the singer
But mix and mingle these, the four,
Like Hafiz he, true joyance-bringer,
Shall quicken folk for evermore.*

VIII

CREATION AND ANIMATION

JACK ADAM was a clod of clay
God shaped a human creature;
Yet from Earth's womb he brought away
Much dress in form and feature.

The Elohim breathed into his nose
The very finest spirit;
He took a sneezing fit, and rose
More like a man of merit.

And yet in brawn and brain and bone
He still was half a lump, sir,
Till Noah for the simpleton
Found his true cure—the bumper.

Betimes the lump perceived a glow,
Well wetted with the potion;
The barm began to stir the dough
Which put itself in motion.

* July 1814.

Thus, Hafiz, may thy singing sweet
And thy devout example,
Lead us, while clinking glasses meet,
Into our Maker's temple.*

IX

Phenomenon

When the dark rain-drift
Phœbus has wooed,
Springeth a rainbow swift,
Rising bright-hued.

There o'er the misty height
Spans the arch now,
What if the bow be white,
Yet 'tis heaven's bow.

Greybeard, with clouds in sight,
Blithe shouldst thou prove;
What if thy hair be white,
Yet shalt thou love!†

* 21st June 1814; suggested by words on Hafiz; first named *Der Urvater*, and again *Der erste Mensch*.

† 25th July 1814. The white rainbow was seen by Goethe as he drove from Weimar.

X

A Thing of Beauty

What motley shows are those that bind
The heavens with yonder height,
Through mists of morning ill defined,
That half defeat the sight?

Are they the Vizier's tents displayed,
Where his loved women bide?
Are they the festal carpets laid
For one most dear—his bride?

Scarlet and white, mixed, freckled, streaked—
Vision of perfect worth!
Hafiz, how comes thy Shiraz thus
To greet the cloudy North?

Yes, neighbour poppies spreading far,
A cordial, various band,
As if to scorn the god of war,
Kindly they robe the land.

So let the sage who serves our earth
With flowers still make it gay,
And, as this morn, the sun shine forth
To light them on my way.*

* Another incident of 25th July 1814.

XI

Discordance

Upon the left beside the rill
Sits Cupid fluting,
The fields to right wild clamours fill,
Mars' trumpet bruiting;
To those pure notes of soft accost
The ear's beguiled,
But all the bloom of song is lost
In uproar wild;
Warbles the flute with liquid strain,
While booms war's thunder;
If sudden frenzy seize my brain,
What cause for wonder?
Louder the flute notes on the left,
The trump still brays;
Distract I roam, of wits bereft;
Should this amaze? *

XII

The Past in the Present

Lily and rose by morn bedewed
Are blooming in the garden near;
Soft with low-growing underwood
The rocks climb upward to the rear;

* 26th July 1814; suggested by Hafiz; the last four lines were a variant of the preceding four, but were allowed by Goethe to stand as above.

And, girdled with its belt of trees,
A feudal castle crowns the height
Where curves its marge by soft degrees,
Till with the valley it unite.

And every air some odour brings
As when love ached in those old days,
Those dawnings when my psaltery-strings
Contended with the morning's rays,
There where from greenwood shades would start,
Rounded and full, the hunters' chant,
To quicken and to fire the heart,
Accordant to its wish or want.

Ever the woods fresh leaves unfold!
With these your soul rejoicing fill;
Pleasures that were your own of old
May be enjoyed through others still;
No man will then complain of us
Care for ourselves was all we had;
Through all life's process various
You must have virtue to be glad.

And with such winding of my lay,
Hafiz, once more we hear thy voice;
'Tis meet in each concluded day
With the rejoicing to rejoice.*

* Fulda, 26th July 1814; the scene is Eisenach, where Karl August had often hunted.

XIII

Song and Plastic Art

From clay wherein his fingers wrought
Fair shapes the Greek may fashion,
And in the son his hand begot
Rejoice with rising passion.

Our hands in the Euphrates stream
Have their delighted play;
The wandering mass, that fleets and flows,
Yields as we sway and stray.

If thus the soul's hot brand be cooled
Then song shall echo clear;
Water, poet's pure hand ruled,
Rounds to a crystal sphere.*

XIV

Audacity

What spring of healing has been found
For man, where'er he be?
All with glad heart attend a sound
Shapen to harmony.

* Compare from *Legende* (Balladen):—

"Sel'gem Herzen frommen Händen
Ballt sich die bewegte Wellen
Herrlich zu Krystallner Kugel."

Hence with whate'er embroils your way!
Nor gloom-enshrouded strive;
Before he sing, before he stay,
The poet first must live.

So may the brazen clang of life
Reverberate through the soul;
The poet's heart though torn by strife
He will himself make whole.*

XV

Hale and Hardy

Song is a certain arrogance,
Let none find fault with me!
But bravely let the warm blood dance
Be gay as I and free.

If bitter every hour's distress
Upon my palate grew,
I should be modest, and no less
Nay, rather more than you.

For modesty charms everyone
In budding maidenhood;
Girls would be gently wooed and won
And fly before the rude.

* 23rd December 1814.

And with a wise man modesty
  Befits—some sage who might
Of time and of eternity
  Teach me the lore aright.

Song is a certain arrogance!
  I ply my craft alone;
Friends, women, of the dancing blood
  Come in, come every one!

You cowl-less shaveling! zealous breath
  Waste not on me! Your flow
Of speech might do my soul to death,
  But make me modest—No!

Your vacuous phrases make me run;
  Such stuff since many a day,
Shoe-leather that I trod upon,
  For me was worn away.

When round the poet's mill-wheel turns,
  Stop not his whirl of rhymes;
For who once understands us learns
  To pardon us betimes.*

* 26th July 1814, on the way from Eisenach to Fulda.

XVI

Universal Life

Dust is an element from which
  Your art a use can wring,
Hafiz, when to extol your Love
  Some dainty song you sing.

For more to be preferred is dust
  That on her threshold lights,
Than carpet on whose gold-wrought flowers
  Kneel Mahmud's favourites.

If from her door whirl clouds of dust,
  Driven by some wind that blows,
Sweeter it breathes to you than musk,
  Or attar of the rose.

Dust! long I was deprived of it
  In the mist-shrouded North,
But in the glowing South for me
  There surely was no dearth.

Loved doors, upon your hinges long
  Sounded no sweet recoil!
Come, heal me, ye tempestuous rains,
  And scent of breathing soil!

For now if all the thunders roll,
Wide heaven with leven glow,
The wind's wild dust, rain-saturate,
Will fall to earth below.

Straightway life leaps; a sacred force
And secret strives in birth;
Fresh mists exhale, green things arise,
O'er all the bounds of earth.*

XVII

OVER the dust comes a shadow black, the beloved's attendant,
Dust I made me for her, but the shadow passed o'er me away.†

An image may I not devise,
If such my pleasure be?
God gives an image of our life
In every midge we see.

An image may I not devise,
If such my pleasure be?
For imaged in my true love's eyes
God gives Himself to me.

* 29th July 1814: heavy rainfall in the night.

† Inserted after Goethe's death in 1837; derived from the Divan of Sultan Selim I.

XVIII

Blessed Yearning

Tell it the wise alone, for when
  Will the crowd cease from mockery!
Him would I laud of living men
  Who longs a fiery death to die.

In coolness of those nights of love
  Which thee begat, bade thee beget,
Strange promptings wake in thee and move,
  While the calm taper glimmers yet.

No more in darkness canst thou rest,
  Waited upon by shadows blind,
A new desire has thee possessed
  For procreant joys of loftier kind.

Distance can hinder not thy flight;
  Exiled, thou seekest a point illumed;
And, last, enamoured of the light,
  A moth art in the flame consumed.

And while thou spurnest at the best,
  Whose word is " Die and be new-born! "
Thou bidest but a cloudy guest
  Upon an earth that knows not morn.*

* Wiesbaden, 31st July 1814.

XIX

A CANE pushed up that worlds might know
What sweetness is indeed!
Ah, would that gracious things might flow
From this, my writing-reed! *

* Suggested by Hafiz or Saadi.

II

HAFIS NAMEH

BOOK OF HAFIZ

The word as bride, the spirit as groom,
So let the pair be named!
Their wedlock's known to him, by whom
Hafiz hath been acclaimed.*

I

SURNAME

Poet

MUHAMMED SHEMS-ED-DIN, say why
Thy people, the illustrious,
Surnamed thee Hafiz.

Hafiz

I reply,
Honouring thy question—it was thus:
Because in happy memory
The Koran's sacred heritage
I hold unaltered, page by page,
And thereby guide me without blame,
So that each day's accustomed ill
Touches not me, nor those who still
Treasure, as well befits indeed,

* Suggested by Hafiz, and originally published as a motto for the whole of the "West-Eastern Divan."

The Prophet's word, the Prophet's seed,—
For such cause they have given the name.

Poet

Whence, Hafiz, as I dare suppose,
A place beside thee I have won;
For when men's thoughts together run
Between the men a likeness grows.
Perfect the likeness is with us;
For of our holy Books I have ta'en
The glorious form on heart and brain,
As on that Kerchief marvellous
The Master's image was impressed;
So quickened is my quiet breast,
Spite of negation, spoil and scathe,
With the bright image of the faith.*

II

INDICTMENT

BUT do you know for whom the demons spy
In the wild waste 'twixt crag and bastion high,
Watching the moment when 'tis possible
To clutch their prey and draw it down to Hell?
The liar and the wretched miscreant.

The poet, then, why shuns he not the haunt
Of folk the like of these? Can this be well?

* 26th June 1814. "Hafiz," one who knows by heart, *i.e.*, the Koran.

Knows he, indeed, with whom he lives and moves
He all whose actions madness sways? He loves
With wayward passion, and its boundless stress
Drives him afar into the wilderness.
His tuneful plaints are written in the sand,
And by the wind are swiftly chased away;
He comprehends not that which he may say,
Nor to the word he says will dare to stand.

And yet his song—men still allow its rule
Yea, though the Koran it should flout. But ye,
Skilled in the law, ye men of piety,
Wise, learnèd, be ye masters of the school,
For each true Mussulman, of duty strict.

Hafiz, in chief, has many a conscience pricked,
Mirza has plunged the soul in questionings vain.
Say ye what men should do, and where refrain.*

III

Fetwa

Hafiz, the poet, in his art expresses
Truth wrought and rounded, indestructible;
Yet here and there are certain little matters
Which overpass the limits of the law.
Wouldst thou in safety walk, so must thou know
To part snake's venom from its antidote.
Yet to the pure desire for noble action

* 10th March 1815; derived in part from the Koran.

Thy heart to abandon with a joyous courage,
And from such things as lead to pains eternal
With sense considerate to preserve thyself,
This sure is best, that error there be none.
So it is written by the poor Ebusund.
God in His mercy pardon all his sins! *

IV

The German Returns Thanks

Saintly Ebusund, thou hast struck the mark!
Such Saint a poet well might wish to be;
Because precisely these same little matters
Which overpass the limits of the law,
These are the freehold, wherein he, presumptuous,
And joyous even 'mid cares, hath his concern,
Snake's venom and the antidote for him
Must seem alike, one even as the other.
This will not slay nor will the other heal,
For the true life is innocence perpetual
In action, which so manifests itself
That, save perchance itself, it hurteth none.
And thus in eld the poet yet may hope
The Houris will receive him favourably,
Transfigured to a youth in Paradise,
Saintly Ebusund, thou hast struck the mark! †

* July 1814. "Fetwa," judicial sentence. The source is found in Hammer's introduction to Hafiz.

† December 1814.

V

FETWA

So Misri's poems the Mufti read, each one
In ordered sequence, till he reached the last;
Whereon deliberate in the flames he cast
The scribe's fair labours, and the book was gone.

"So burn all those"—the high Judge his voice uplifts—
"Of faith and speech like Misri's; only he
Shall suffer not the fiery penalty;
To every poet hath Allah given gifts;
Were they misused in sinful paths he trod,
Let him see to it and come to terms with God!" *

VI

LIMITLESS

THOU canst not end, and that doth make thee great,
Thou never dost begin—that is thy fate.
Thy song wheels round as does the starry frame,
End and beginning evermore the same,
And what the middle brings we clearly see
Is what the opening was, the end shall be.

* From Toderine on the Literature of the Turks; probably about January 1815.

Thou art of joys a true poetic fount,
Wave welling after wave from thee past count.
A mouth that never tires of kisses,
A bosom-song that sweetly goes,
A throat afret for winecup blisses,
A generous heart that overflows.

Ah! let the whole world slide and sink,
Hafiz, with thee alone the strife
Of song I seek. Twin-brothers we,
Our pain, our pleasure common be!
To love like thee, like thee to drink,
Shall be my pride, shall be my life.

Now sound forth Song with thy own proper fire,
Song of the older, of the newer choir.*

VII

Imitation

In your rhymes' mode myself I hope to find,
The sound reiterated should please me well;
The idea first, then language I shall find;
No echoing clang shall be twice audible,
Unless some special meaning be designed,
As you contrive, who bear o'er all the bell!

* Probably 10th November 1814.

For as a spark, enkindling in its kind,
The imperial city, while the fierce flames swell,
Which glow self-nourished, fanned by their own wind,
Itself extinct, mounts where the calm stars dwell,
So the eternal flame doth wind and dart
From thee to rouse anew a German heart.

Truly the measured cadence has a charm;
There in the craftsman's skill its joy has sought;
And yet how swift the indignant soul's alarm
At hollow masks, bloodless and void of thought;
Even wit itself scarce seems with gladness fraught
Unless to some new form its thought be led
Making an end of form outworn and dead.*

VIII

To Hafiz

Hafiz, thy equal e'er to be
Were dream insane!
A bark drives onward fast and free
O'er the tossed main;
She feels her sail swell joyously,
Rides proud and bold;
Does Ocean will to rend her, she
Rots as she's rolled.

* 7th December 1814; a partial reproduction of the Ghazel rhyme-system.

In songs, how light, how swift, for thee
Cool waters flow;
They leap in waves of fire, but me
The o'ermastering glow
Engulphs. Yet bring I one proud plea,
Bold, unreproved—
I in a sun-bright land, like thee
Have lived and loved.*

IX

Open Secret

"The mystical tongue" they have named you,
O Hafiz, our saint, nor to one
Of these scholars so learnèd in word-lore
The meaning of "mystic" is known.

A "mystic"—because in your pages
Their silliest notions they hail,
And their own sorry vintage the tapsters
In your name, as true Hafiz, retail.

Pure mystic you are, and with reason,
For your meaning they never can hit,
You, while nowise the pious the blessed!
A fact they refuse to admit.†

* 22nd December 1815; inserted after Goethe's death, in 1837, the "sun-bright land," Italy.

† 10th December 1814; suggested by Hammer's Hafiz.

X

Signal

And yet they are right whom I have shent:
For of itself 'tis evident
One simple sense a word has not.
A word's a fan! a glance is shot
Between the sticks from eyes divine;
The fan's a veil, no more, whose fine
Substance may keep the face in shade,
But cannot hide from me the maid,
Since her prime loveliness, the eyes,
Flash into mine some swift surprise.*

XI

To Hafiz

What all men sigh for you have known,
And thoroughly scanned, for all,
Even from the dust up to the throne,
Desire holds fast in thrall.

What woe it works, what wear betimes!
Who would oppose its stress?
If this man break his neck, that climbs
Adventurous none the less.

* Originally (1815) named "Widerruf."

Your pardon, Master, bold thoughts stir
  Oft, as you know, in me,
When mine eyes she draws after her—
  The wandering cypress-tree.

True as root-fibrils glides her foot,
  Wooing the ground beneath,
Like light cloud melting, her salute,
  Like orient airs her breath.

Sweet presage thrills through all our blood
  When rippled locks unbind,
Brown opulence of a coiling flood,
  And sibilant to the wind.

Then the clear brow gleams to the view,
  Your heart perturbed to smoothe,
You hear a song, all glad and true,
  The spirit to rock and soothe.

And when the singing lips you see
  In gracious wise astir,
They make you on the instant free
  To gyve your prisoner.

The breath pants forth without repeal,
  Soul to soul taking flight,
While through your bliss sweet odours steal
  Clouds that elude the sight.

But when the strong flame lustiest burns,
You grasp the goblet fair;
He runs, he comes, with quick returns,
Once, twice, the cupbearer.

Sparkles his eye, his heart beats swift,
He hopes to learn your lore,
Then when the wine your spirit doth lift
To watch your thought upsoar.

For him the world's vast space lies shown,
His heart is ordered joy,
His breast swells, darkens the lip's down,
No more is he a boy!

And when no secret hides from you
That heart and world can hold,
The sage you beckon, kind and true,
The meanings to unfold.

And lest the Prince no grace accord,
Whose throne's our shield and spear,
You give the Shah some gracious word,
And give to the Vizier.

All this you know and sing to-day,
Next morn like songs you find,
And guide us friend-like on our way
Through life, the rough, the kind.*

* September 1818. Line 12, "wandering cypress-tree," the beloved, so described by the Eastern poets.

III

USCHK NAMEH

BOOK OF LOVE

Ah! say to me
For what my whole heart sighs!
My heart's with thee;
Hold it a thing of price! *

I

MASTERPIECES

LISTEN, and in memory fix
Pairs of lovers, six and six!
Description kindles, love doth fan the flames—
Rustan and Rodavoo their names.
Lovers unknown, who yet are nigh,—
Jussuf, Zuleika, is our cry.
Love for love's sake, with nought to win,—
Such love knew Ferhad and Schirin.
Each for the other, whole and sole,—
Medschnun and Leila touched that goal.

* The suggestion is from Hafiz.

Old eyes made young with passion's ray,—
So Dschemil looked on Boteinah.
Sweet wile and whim on loving set,—
Solomon and the throned brunette.
To these hast thou given earnest heed,
So shall thy love be establishèd.*

II

Another Pair

Yes, love is high desert! In vain
A man might look for fairer gain.
Equal, though wealth nor power thy fee,
With mightiest heroes mayst thou be.
Men laud the prophets, but as well
Of Wamik and of Asra tell;
Nay, need not *tell*—the names suffice,
Such names must all men recognize.
What deeds they wrought, what ways they moved,
No man doth know; but that they loved
We know. Enough that word to speak,
If one for Wamik and for Asra seek.†

* Not later than May 1815. In the German lines 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14 merely consist of the proper names; to find rhymes in English is hardly possible.

† The Persian romance of Wamik and Asra was lost through the destructive zeal of Mohammedan fanaticism.

III

READING-BOOK

Book of books most wonderful
Is sure the book of Love;
Heedfully I have read it through;
Of joys some scanty leaves,
Whole sheets writ o'er with pain;
Separation forms a section,
Reunion a little chapter,
And that a fragment. Troubles run to volumes,
Drawn out with due elucidations,
Endless and measureless.
O Nisami!—yet at last
It was the right way thou didst find;
The insoluble, ah! who can solve it?
Lovers, when heart once more meets heart.*

IV

Yes, these the eyes, yes, these the lips,
That gazed in mine, that gave the kiss,
The fair round body, slender hips,
As formed for Paradise's bliss.

* Suggested by verses of the Turkish poet Nischani. After 23rd December 1815.

Was she here? Whither flown from sight?
Yes she was here, that gift she gave,
Gave me herself in act of flight,
And made my life her fettered slave.*

V

WARNED

TRAMMELLED in curls have I been too,
Unwilling to be freed;
My Hafiz, for your friend and you
Like fortune was decreed.

But now great drifts of hair they plight,
Unmeasured tresses tower,
Our warriors helmed advance to fight;
Ah! we have felt their power.

Yet such constraint of power he shuns
Whose thought is wise and ware,
Alarmed by ponderous chains, he runs
Into the slender snare.

VI

SUBMERGED

CURLS overrunning such a dear, round head!
And may I, in this wealth of rippled hair,

* 21st July 1818.

Let my full hands but wander here and there,
Life from the heart's deep fount will leap and spread.
And if my lips her brow, eyes, mouth have found,
I am made whole, though every kiss a wound.
The five-toothed comb, where should it stop or stay?
Back to the curls already 'tis away!
Nor does the ear forbid the dallying sport;
Mere flesh and blood never so delicately
Could yield to frolic or soft touches court!
Yet toying with the little head we sigh,
Amid such opulence of rippled hair
For ever to and fro to wander there.
Thus, Hafiz, you long since were wont to do,
We now the sweet observances renew.*

VII

DISTRUSTFUL

SHOULD I of the emeralds speak
Which daintily your finger shows?
A word at times we needs must seek,
'Tis better oft the lips to close.

Well, then, I call the colour green,
Say 'tis enlivening to the eye,
But not a word must slip between
Of smart and scar to dread hardby.

* Line 7, "five-toothed comb," the hand.

Why has your wonted might prevailed?
I care not; read the whole truth thus:—
" Quickening as is the emerald,
So is the wearer dangerous." *

VIII

SWEET love! in cumbrous volume lie
Constrained, alas! my songs that darted
Through clearest region of the sky,
Hither, thither, free, light-hearted.
Time doth all things ruinate,
These alone will ne'er remove
Every line shall hold its state
Deathless as immortal love.

IX

WHY these slow hours that do me wrong?
Life is short, the day is long.
And ever sighs my heart for flight,
If heavenward scarce I know aright;
But forth it would, away, away,
Some flight beyond itself to essay.
If flown to her beloved breast,
Unconscious there in heaven its rest;

* 30th September 1815.

Life's eddyings catch it in their race
Although it cling to one sole place;
Whate'er it lose, whate'er intend,
Its own dupe proven in the end.*

X

Sorry Consolation

Midnight! I wept and sobbed,
Being bereft of thee.
Then came phantoms of night,
And I was shamed:
" Phantoms of night," said I,
" Sobbing and weeping thus
You find me, who until now
Slept as you glided by.
Precious things do I lack,
Deem not the worse of me,
Whom you erewhile named wise;
Grievous ill hath befallen! "—
And the phantoms of night,
Pulling the longest of faces,
By me stalked,
If I were wise or a fool
Utterly unconcerned.†

* 22nd July 1818.
† Eisenach, 24th May 1814; suggestions from Hafiz.

XI

Soon Satisfied

" How widely from the mark you have flown
To think that love had made the girl your own!
Such conquest for my part could hardly please;
It seems she's an adept in flatteries."

Poet

Enough! I have her, and the rest let shift!
Yet for excuse may this be said—
Love is at best a free-will gift,
Homage in flattery is paid.*

XII

Greeting

O but how blest was I!
I walked the country ways,
Where Hudhud ran along the path;
Shells of the ancient sea
I sought in stones, shells turned to stone;
Hudhud with stately pace,
Spreading abroad her crown,
Flaunted with drollest air;

* Not earlier than 24th May 1815.

It was life's raillery,
That mocked at death.
" Hudhud," said I, " in truth
Thou art a beauteous bird!
Haste then, my hoopoe, haste
To greet my well-beloved,
Tell her that I am hers
For evermore!
Thy part it also was
Twixt Solomon
And her on Sheba's throne
Long since to play the go-between! " *

XIII

HUDHUD spake: " One glance confessed
All her inmost heart to me.
Now, as ever, I am blest
Because of your felicity.
Love on! In lonely midnight hours
See written in the stars above
How, aided by the eternal Powers,
Resplendent ever stands your love! " †
Hudhud, with a roguish look,
Charming from her leafy haunt,
Sits nested in the palm-tree nook
And is ever vigilant.

* Frankfurt, 27th May 1815. † First inserted posthumously.

Fair and precious is the gift,
Happily the wish was guessed;
Was the offering duly bless'd?
Such assurance still I miss.

Say, should that not follow after?
Modest he, nor snatched it; now,
What if she herself allow!
Hudhud go and tell her this! *

XV

Submission

" You perish and remain so kind,
Waste, and your sweet song knows no stay! "

Poet

Love wrought on me with evil mind!
That in good truth I well may say;
I sing indeed with heavy heart.
But see these tapers—'tis their part
To shine even while they waste away.†

---

* The subject is a comb of Marianne von Willemar; posthumously inserted.

† Frankfurt, 27th May 1815; suggestions from Hafiz.

Love's anguish sought a place apart,
  Where all was desolate, wild and rude;
He found betimes my empty heart,
  And nested in the solitude.*

XVI

INEVITABLE

WHO can bid the bird cease singing
  O'er the field when the blossom peers?
Who can stay the sheep from wringing
  While the shepherd plies his shears?

Is my bearing so unruly
  When they twist and twirl my wool?
No! the shearer's tousling truly
  Compels the plunge or pull.

And my song shall it cease for chiding,
  As it mounts the heaven so high,
To the clouds aloft confiding
  How sweet is her witchery? †

* *Rehandling from Hafiz.*
† Wiesbaden, 31st August 1814; suggested by Hafiz.

XVII

Secret

At my Love's glances signalling
Folk stand in dumb surprise;
But I, love's scholar, read right well
The meanings in her eyes.

Thus runs the sense: this man I love
Not that, nor who stands yonder;
Quit then, my worthy masters all,
Your hankering and wonder.

Yes: round the circle sweep her eyes
With unimagined power,
Only to tell him it draws near,
Love's sweet, expected hour.*

XVIII

Most Secret

" Anecdote-mongers diligent
Are we, and eager to discover
Who your Beloved is, and if
You're plagued with many a rival lover.

* Same date as last; suggested by Hafiz.

For that your heart is gone we see,—
Congratulations, pray, receive—
But that your Love makes like return
We cannot, be it confessed, believe."

Unhindered, worthy gentlemen,
Seek her; yet hear a word, but one—
You tremble when she stands anear,
Caress her image when she is gone.

Knew you but how Schehâb-eddin
On Arafat laid his robe aside,
No man whose spirit and deed are kin
To his would you as fool deride.

If by thine Emperor's throne, or where
The Well-belovèd holds her state,
Thy name were ever told aloud,
No other guerdon were as great.

Hence grief supreme it was what time
The dying Medschnun spake the word
That before Leila from that hour
His name should nevermore be heard.*

* Not later than 30th May 1815. Burdach says that the poem has reference to Maria Ludvoika, Empress of Austria. May it not also have a secondary meaning, and the poets Beloved be Truth or the Ideal? *See* Loeper's note.

IV

TEFKIR NAMEH

BOOK OF REFLECTIONS

I

HEAR counsel rung from the lyric chord
Which serves not save you bring the faculty;
Scorn is the meed of the happiest word,
If the hearer's ear be set awry.

What rings from the lyre? This, clear and wide,
Not the best is she who is fairest bride;
Yet we count you not one of our guild, until
On the Fairest and Best you have set your will.*

II

FIVE THINGS

FIVE things that bring not forth yet other five:
This lesson with an open ear receive!
The flower of friendship no proud heart can raise;
A base companion learns not courteous ways;

* July 1814; the first two lines from Hafiz.

A villain ne'er will come to high estate;
No envious man pities the unfortunate;
For truth and faith a liar hopes in vain.
Hold fast this rede; let no man filch thy gain! *

III

FIVE OTHERS

WHAT makes time fly?
A task to ply!
What brings it to a weary stand?
Idle head and idle hand!
What runs up scores to pay?
To suffer and delay!
What brings grist to the mill?
Not to puzzle the will!
What makes a respectful beholder?
Hitting straight from the shoulder! †

IV

LOVELY, a maiden's glance that speeds a sign,
The drinker's glance before he sips the wine,

* 15th December 1814; from Silvestre de Sacy's translation from the Pend Nameh of Ferid-ed-din Attar.

† Or more literally :—

What wins men's reverence?
Self-defence.

16th December 1814.

Greeting of lord who waives authority,
Sunshine in autumn playing over thee.
Lovelier than these, keep still before thine eyes
The needy hand for slender ministries
Gracefully urgent, and what thou dost give
With grace of gratitude prompt to receive.
Fair glance! fair greeting! speech in mute essay!
Observe it right and thou wilt give alway! *

V

In the Pend-Nameh stands a rede,
Writ from the heart thy heart to prove:
To whom thou givest thyself indeed,
Him as thine own self thou wilt love.
Reach thy glad doit to him or her,
Heap not a golden legacy!
Haste, and with cheerful spirit prefer
The instant hour to memory! †

VI

By the forge of a smith do you chance to ride,
You know not when he may shoe your mare;
Do you see in the fields a hut, inside
Do you know but a sweetheart has shelter there?

* 26th July 1814, on the drive from Eisenach to Fulda.
† Same date as the last.

Do you meet a youth, bold, proper and trim,
He will conquer you later, or you'll conquer him;
Be sure of the vine-stock you may say
It will bring you a gift of grace some day.
So here to the world you're commended aright;
And what remains over I will not recite.*

VII

HONOUR the salutation of the unknown!
No less than greeting of old friend esteem it.
After few words exchanged, ye say farewell,
Thou to the east, he westward, go your roads.
If after many years your paths should cross,
All unforeseen, with glad exclaim ye cry—
"It is he! Yes, there it was!" forgetting quite
So many a voyaging day by land and sea,
So many a revolution of the sun.
Now barter merchandise, now share your gains!
Old confidence effects a new alliance—
Worth many a thousand is the first salute:
Therefore give greetings kind to each that greets thee! †

VIII

FOREVER of your faults and you
They have had so much to say,
Ay, and to set them forth as true
Have laboured every way.

* 27th May 1815. † Jena, 12th July 1819.

If of your merits they had sense
Some kindly word to say,
With faithful, clear intelligence
Pointed the better way,
O certainly the highest and best
Its presence must display,
Which counts perchance not many a guest
'Mongst those in cloister grey.
Now, as some scholar you might choose
Admitted late, I pray
Teach me of penitence the use,
When man has gone astray.*

IX

MARKETS stir the buyer's greed;
But knowledge puffeth up indeed.
Who looks around with quiet eye
Learns how love doth edify.
Didst night and day thy pains bestow
Much to hear and much to know,
Now hearken at another door,
How to win the better lore.
Shall Justice dwell in thee, thou must
Feel in God something that is just;
Who flames with some pure love alone
Will by the loving God be known.†

* Inserted in 1827.

† Inserted in 1827. The markets are marts of learning, or book-markets.

X

WHILE I was honest
Things went to the bad;
Long years of self-torment
And anguish I had.
Men esteemed and despised me;
Say, say what it meant.
Then I longed to turn knave,
Tried with busy intent,
But possess me it could not,
Though shattered and rent.
So I thought " To be honest,
All told, is the best; "
'Twas a plaguy affair
I've bided the test.*

XI

THE blessed brood of Abraham know
In sturdy beggary joys to reap;
In the bazaar I watch them go,
Chaffering for wares, dog-cheap, dirt-cheap.†

XII

QUESTION not through what gate of grace
Into God's city thou hast come,
But where at first thou took'st thy place,
There bide, and fill thy quiet room.

* Inserted in 1827. † Inserted posthumously.

Then gaze around! Behold the wise,
The mighty, set in high command!
Those the enlighteners of thine eyes,
These to add virtue to thy hand.

If, loyal servant of the state,
Thy tranquil uses thou dost prove,
Know thou shalt suffer no man's hate
And many men will yield thee love.

The life of action—faithfulness—
The Prince shall fail not to behold;
And new things shall be seen no less
Firm in endurance than the old.

If strong and gentle, thou thy round
Of life shalt run and touch the goal,
Thou in thy measure shalt be found
Exemplar to some younger soul.*

XIII

WHENCE came I? That remains a question still;
The way thus far my thought can scarce re-measure;
But here and now—glad day of miracle!—
As friends are meeting, greeting, pain and pleasure.

* Sent from Wiesbaden, 30th May 1815 (with two other stanzas), for the jubilee of work of the Weimar officials Kirms and Schardt.

O sweet good fortune when the two grow one!
For who would laugh, and who would weep,
alone? *

XIV

One after other hence departs,
Ay, or may go before:
So, brisk and brave, with manly hearts,
Let's tread life's pathway o'er!

Flower-gatherings, glancing off the track,
Delay you in good sooth,
But nothing fiercelier holds you back
Than treason to the truth.†

XV

With woman deal forbearingly!
Shapen from a crooked rib was she;
Exactly straight God could not make her,
If you would bend, you break her;
Leave her in peace and crookeder she grows;
Worse thing than this, good Adam, say who
knows;
With woman deal forbearingly:
To break your rib small gain can be! ‡

* 13th September 1818; inserted in the *Divan* 1827.
† Inserted 1827; a suggestion from a hymn.
‡ Not later than 30th May 1815; from the Sunna (Sayings of Mohammed) in Hammer's rendering.

XVI

LIFE is in truth a sorry sport,
In this or that each man comes short,
One wants too much, one none at all,
While power and fortune toss the ball;
And if misfortune play a part,
Each bears it with reluctant heart.
Till, last, the heirs with beaming front
Bear gravewards Master Can't-and-Won't.*

XVII

LIFE is a game of goose; we pace
Swift on our forward way,
Quicklier to reach that halting-place
Where none would choose to stay.

They say that geese are stupid things;
O lend such folk no ear,
For one turned round with signallings
To point me to the rear.

Far different is this world, where all
Press eager to advance,
And if we make a trip or fall,
No soul will backward glance.†

* Inserted in the *Divan* in 1827.

† 15th December 1814. For some explanation of the game of Goose *see* Burdach's note in the Jubiläums-Ausgabe (v. p. 253).

XVIII

" THE years," thou sayest, " take so much away;
The proper pleasure of the senses' play;
The sweet recall of loveliest wiles and words
Last eve; nor vantage true it now affords
To speed from land to land; no princely token
Of merit recognized, no praises spoken,
Once welcome, now delight; no more avails
Action for joy; thy courage quails and fails.
Remains one special thing I know not of? "
Enough remains! Illumined thought and love! *

XIX

THROUGH Erfurt once my journey lay—
Roamed o'er so oft in days long gone;
I seemed, though years had flown away,
Welcome and dear to everyone.

And when old dames from stall and booth
Me—old like them—would gladly greet,
I thought I saw those days of youth
We each for other made so sweet.

That was a baker's daughter; she
Beside her a shoe-vamper thriving;

* 10th February 1818; inserted in 1827; "illumined thought" (last line) is in the original *Idee*.

No owl the first was certainly,
The other knew the art of living.

Hafiz, thy rival I would be
In this, and may the humour last,
To take the present joyously,
And share my gladness in the past.*

XX

BEFORE the man of learned skill
'Tis safe to stand for good or ill;
If o'er your task you long have ailed
He straightway knows where you have failed;
But hope approval in his sight;
He knows when you have hit the white.†

XXI

FREE-HAND is duped with a lie,
Close-fist is soon sucked dry,
Clear-wit's led astray into vanity,
Deep-brain stretched thin to inanity,
Hard-heart is dodged and rooked,
Soft-head is snared and hooked:

* 25th July 1814; posthumously inserted in the *Divan*.
† 16th November 1819; inserted in 1827.

Be lord of the lies they weave,
You, the deceived, deceive! *

XXII

He who has rule o'er thee will now
Yield praise; again a fault will find;
And, good and faithful servant, thou
Must each accept with equal mind.

Some trivial thing may win his praise,
Blame be bestowed where praise were right;
Be of good cheer through all the days,
And, last, stand proven in his sight.

Ye great ones, bear you toward the Lord
Like those who walk in lowly ways;
Act, suffer, as He gives the word,
And keep good cheer through all the days.†

* It is difficult to approximate to the German :—

Freigebiger wird betrogen,
Geizhafter ausgesogen,
Verständiger irregeleitet,
Vernünftiger leer geweitet,
Der Harte wird umgangen,
Der Gimpel wird gefangen.
Beherrsche diese Lüge,
Betrogener, betrüge!

† Not later than May 1815; suggestion from Saadi's Gulistan.

XXIII

TO SHAH SEDSCHAN AND SUCH AS HE

THROUGH all the Transoxonians' blare
And clashings hollow,
Our song grows bold and still will dare
Thy steps to follow!

Living in thee, no wrong
Our spirits can whelm;
Prince, may thy life be long,
Endless thy realm! *

XXIV

HIGHEST FAVOUR

UNTAMED of mood, as then I was,
Sometime I a Master found,
And tamed, when many a year did pass,
I a Mistress also found.
Strictly they put me to the test,
Loyal and true my heart was found,
Carefully held me close possessed
As though some treasure they had found;
The man that serves two masters—he
Thereby good fortune never found;

* About May 1815; Shah Sedschan stands for Karl August.

Master and Mistress gladly see
That I by both of them was found;
My star and fortune shone on me
When such a pair as these I found.*

XXV

Many a land have I travelled through,
Seen almost the whole human crew,
No corner but I have inspected it,
Not a stalk but has yielded me some wheat;
So blessed a city I never have spied,
Houris on houris, bride on bride.†

XXVI

Firdusi speaks

O world, how shameless and malign thou art!
Who feedest, fosterest, slayest, the same hour.

None save to whom Allah doth grace impart
Is fed and fostered, life and wealth his dower.

---

* This Ghazel has reference to Goethe's relations with the Grand Duke Karl August and his wife.

† Versified from words of the Persian Ambassador at St Petersburg, May 1816. Inserted after Goethe's death.

What then is wealth? A warming sun a-shine;
It glads the beggars; not less glad are we;
Nor let the rich begrudge the beggar's fee—
Self-will unchartered, his delight divine.*

XXVII

Dschelal-ed-din Rumi speaks

Bidest thou in the world, a dream it flies;
Thou journeyest—fate has fixed the boundaries;
Seizure of thine nor heat nor cold hath stayed
And all that blooms for thee anon will fade.†

XXVIII

Zuleika speaks

The mirror tells me I am fair;
You say that age is writ in the decree.
All things with God a changeless aspect wear;
Love Him at least this moment's space in me!

* As indicated by the title, from Firdus
† Before 30th May 1815.

V

RENDSCH NAMEH

BOOK OF ILL HUMOUR

I

" WHENCE took you this you sing?
How came you by the thing?
How from life's leavings vain
This kindling did you gain,
The last sparks, faint as few
To foster and renew? "

Misdeem not, nor suppose
Life's usual sparks were those;
Space without bounds or bars,
The ocean of the stars,
I knew, not love and lorn,
But, as it were, newborn.

The flocks of sheep were white,
Billowing o'er hill and height,
Tended by herdsmen grave,
Who glad their little gave;
Such tranquil kindly folk
That each some joy awoke.

In nights of shuddering fear
With threat of combat near,
Groaning of camels shook
The ear, the soul; and took
Their leader's spirits, daunting
Their fantasy and vaunting.

And ever on we haste,
Ever some wider waste,
Till all our way and wending
Seemed but a flight unending,
And blue, past wilds we flee,
Stretched the illusive sea.*

II

THERE'S not a rhymer you can find
But is the best in his own eyes,
No fiddler but is most inclined
To fiddle his own melodies.

Nor shall they be reproached by me,
For honouring others we deprive
Ourselves of our nobility;
How should we live if others live?

* Not later than 30th May 1815.

In antechambers I have seen
'Twas just the same, where 'twas agreed
No difference could be found between
Mouse-dirt and coriander-seed.

The Past would hate, you may be sure,
New brooms which make such vigorous play,
And these in turn could not endure
The worn-out brooms of yesterday.

When nations part in bitterness,
Each holding cheap the ancient friend,
Neither is willing to confess
That both pursued the self-same end.

Gross egoism and manifest—
Some folk can't speak too ill of it,
Who least of all their grief digest
When others make some happy hit.*

III

FRIENDSHIP with countrymen of mine
Is not a need with me;
Fair words confederate and combine
With bitterest enmity.

* Written 26th July 1814; rehandled 23rd December 1814. Stanza 5 refers to France and Germany.

Ever, as blander they would show,
My menaces flew free;
Dark morn and stormy sunset-glow
Untroubled I could see;
The water I let flow—let flow
Whether for grief or glee,
Possessed, whate'er I undergo,
Of strong self-mastery.
Pleasures the passing hours bestow
Best with their needs agree,
Nor do I thwart them; each should know
His proper appetency.
They greet me all, each one a foe
Who hates me mortally.*

IV

Does a man find himself easy and gay,
At once to plague him every neighbour's vieing;
While the brave fellow lives and works away,
To stone the man were gratifying;
But by and by, once he is dead,
What big subscriptions are collected!
In honour of the wretched life he led
A monument must be erected.
The public in considering the plan
If its own interest should have a thought;
More sensible it were if the good man,
Once dead, were clean forgot.†

* 19th March 1818; published posthumously. † 7th February 1815

V

Power that o'ermasters—this, admit,
We cannot from the world expel,
Converse with men of finest wit,
Converse with tyrants likes me well.

Ever the noisiest knockings sound
From stupid, cribbed and cabined folk;
Half-men, of spirit shrunken, bound
Would gladly bow us to their yoke.

I have declared myself as free
Alike from fools and from your sage;
These take the matter quietly,
And those would rend themselves for rage.

They think we must at last prove one
In force and love for mutual aid;
For me such men bedim the sun,
And turn to fever-heat my shade.

Hafiz, and Ulrich Hutten too,
Stood armed, addressed to stout resistance,
Against the brown cowls or the blue;
Mine dress as do their fellow-Christians.

" Let's know your foes, their name and state! "
Nay, none shall draw destructions here;
For from their body corporate
Enough I have borne this many a year.*

* 7th February 1815.

VI

To ape, re-shape, mis-shape me, each in turn,
Now for at least full fifty years they have sought;
None the less, what your worth may be, I thought
In your own native fields you best may learn;
You in your time have played the madcap rude
With a wild, young, demonic-genial crew;
Then softly year by year you closer drew
To wise men of divine mansuetude.*

VII

If on the Good you rest secure
I'll ne'er think blame your due;
If you have wrought the Good, be sure
That will ennoble you;
But if around your Good you have reared
Your fence, or hedge have heaved,
Why, I live free, and on my word
In no wise live deceived.

For good are men, yet, be it confessed,
Better they might be found,
If as one shapes his course, the rest
Went not the selfsame round;

* Line 1 in the original "Mich nach-und umzubilden, miss-zubilden."

Take for your way this word of grace,
Which can wring no man's wither—
If we would all attain *one* place,
Then let us march together.

But many an obstacle will rise,
Our forward feet to fetter;
In love no mortal ever sighs
For aider or abettor;
Honour and coin each man would have
Gladly for his sole spending,
And wine, the loyal and the brave,
Breeds quarrels ere the ending.

On such things Hafiz has been frank,
And many a word has spoken,
Musing on many a foolish prank,
His head he too has broken.
Quitting the world, I cannot see
How we should better fare,
And if the worst should come, make free
With handfuls of your hair.*

VIII

As if on names could rest what ne'er
Save self-evolved in silence grows!
I love the Good which is the Fair
As from the thought of God it rose!

* 26th July 1814.

Some man I love—such is my need;
None hate I; must this come to pass,
Ready I am for hate indeed,
Prompt hate for some collective mass.

Would you know better who are meant,
What's right, what's wrong, hold well in sight!
What they shall name all-excellent,
'Tis more than likely's not the right.

To grasp what's right our life must be
Based on foundations deep and sure,
To prate and gyrate seems to me
A shallow putting forth of power.

And well may Master Tatterer deem
The wanton Scatterer his friend,
And to himself the Shatterer seem
Best of the trio in the end.

That ever, with each day's renewing,
Some new thing should be heard with joy,
And all the while this scattering, strewing,
Should each one inwardly destroy!

Of this, though Deutsch or Teutsch his style,
Still is our dear compatriot fain;
The song pipes secretly the while—
So was it, so it will remain.*

* 27th July 1814; "Tatterer," "Scatterer," and "Shatterer" of Stanza 5 attempt to imitate the German, "Herr Knitterer," "Zersplitterer," and "Verwitterer." Deutsch or Teutsch, *i.e.*, the German, or the German pledged to the cult of nationality.

IX

MEDSCHNUN means—no, I would not say
It means precisely one that's mad;
But if I boast me as Medschnun, stay,
Nor think my folly to upbraid.

If the full, loyal heart o'erflows
To save you, powerless to refrain,
Cry not you " There the madman goes!
Fetch us the cords, produce the chain! "

And when the wiser languishing,
Captive and bound, shall meet your eye,
Like fiery nettles it will sting
To be but helpless standers-by.*

X

WHEN did I ever counsel you
How battles should be fought and won?
Or blame because the terms you drew
Of peace, when feats of arms were done?

I have seen the fisher cast his net,
Looked on, nor spoke, and left him there;
The master-joiner I can let,
Unschooled by me, adjust his square.

* Not later than 30th May 1815.

But you—you would know thus and thus,
In better wise what I have known,
What Nature, gladly industrious
For my sake, made long since my own.

In your own selves do you divine
Like force—push on in your own trade!
But should you look on work of mine
Learn—" Thus he willed it should be made! " *

XI

The Wanderer's Peace of Heart

If baseness have its hour
Let none cry " Wellaway! "
For baseness—it is power
Whatever folk may say.

In evil it bears rule,
Winning huge prizes still,
And justice it can school
Whatever way it will.

Wanderer! thy strength wouldst try
'Gainst what will be and must?
Whirlwind and filth that's dry
Let spin and mount in dust! †

* Not later than 30th May 1815. † 19th November 1814.

XII

WHO from the world will that demand
She craves in dreams, while with an eye,
Glanced backward or on either hand,
She lets the day of days go by?
Her efforts and goodwill limp slow,
Following swift life that runs the way,
And what you needed years ago,
That she would proffer you to-day.*

XIII

To praise oneself is sure a fault; yet who
That does aught good escapes it? If he feigns
In those his words no whit, and all be true,
The good for ever good remains.

You fools! the wise, who knows his due,
Rob him not of his happy mood,
When squandering—he a fool like you—
The world's insipid gratitude.†

XIV

BELIEVE you, then, from lip to ear
Can come one veritable gain?

* Not later than 30th May 1815; suggestion from Saadi.
† Inserted in 1827; suggestion from the Persian.

Fool! the tradition you revere
Is but a cobweb of the brain!

Now first 'tis judgment should convince;
From chains of faith that still enslave you
Reason alone has power to save you,
That Reason you renounced long since!

XV

Our patriot ape, the Briton ape,
Gallic, Italianated,
They one and all their purpose shape
As self-love postulated.

With one and all the admiring vein
Is not a thing of rigour,
Save on some day when they would gain
Its help to cut a figure.

And Good may till to-morrow wait
For friendly hearts and faces,
If only Ill to-day grow great
With favours and with places.

Let him who fails to learn and mark
Three thousand years still stay,

Void of experience, in the dark,
And live from day to day.*

XVI

Of old the sacred Koran did they cite,
They named the verse and chapter ever blest,
And each good Mussulman, as was but right,
Reverenced, and felt his conscience was at rest.
The modern Dervish nothing better knows,
But prates of old and new with endless zest;
Each day our most admired disorder grows.
O sacred Koran! O eternal rest! †

XVII

THE PROPHET SPEAKS

Irks it some man that God in His high place
Should grant Mohammed guardianship and grace?
Let him his roof-tree's sturdiest timber choose,
Let him make fast thereto a proper noose,
Let him adjust his neck. Is it stoutly made?
So shall he feel his anger is allayed.‡

* Lines 1, 2, in the original :—

Und wer franzet oder britet,
Italiänert oder teutschet.

† Inserted in 1827 ; Goethe on "the new theology."
‡ 23rd February 1815 ; suggestion from the Koran.

XVIII

TIMUR SPEAKS

WHAT, lying Priests, you take it ill, this storm
Of human pride and passion never sated?
If Allah had decreed me to be worm,
Belike a worm I then had been created.*

* Inserted in 1827. Timur stands for Napoleon.

VI

HIKMET NAMEH

BOOK OF MAXIMS

I

TALISMANS in this Book I mean to strew
And thus a proper equipoise effect.
Prick with a pious needle, and expect
Everywhere some good word to gladden you.

II

LET nothing from to-day, to-night, be sought,
Save that which yesterday and last night brought.

III

WHO to the world in evillest days was sent
May feel in evil days a sweet content.

IV

How easy this or that is, he has wit
To know who attained or who invented it.

V

THE sea swells ever,
The land restrains it never.

VI

FORTUNE doth prove thee; know why thus she has come—
She wills thee to be continent. Follow dumb!

VII

STILL it is day. Up man, to work once more!
The night, when none can work, is at the door.

VIII

WOULDST thou remake the world? Long since 'twas made!
Creation's Lord each point has duly weighed.
Thy lot is fallen; the course assigned intend;
The way is entered, follow to the end;
For care and cumber, though they change it never,
Will fling thee off thy equipoise for ever!

IX

WHEN the sore oppressed complains
None will help or hope afford,
For his healing still remains
Virtue in a kindly word.

X

"STRANGE! in how maladroit a way you bore
Yourself, when Fortune entered at your door!"
She did not reckon it among my crimes,
The damsel called again, ay, various times.

XI

MY heritage how spacious! how sublime!
Time's the estate I hold, my field is time.

XII

Do good pure-hearted for the love of good,
And leave it to the offspring of your blood!
If with your children it should not remain,
For your grandchildren it will yet be gain.

XIII

ENVIRI says, a man of noblest strain,
To whom deepest heart is known, and loftiest brain,
Always and everywhere avail these three—
Rectitude, judgment, longanimity.*

XIV

WHY should you make complaint that you have foes?
How should you ever gain a friend from those
For whom that one like you exists at all
Is a reproach silent, perpetual?

XV

NO stupid word is worse to bear
Than when the stupid tell the wise,
In their great days of victories,
How proper is a modest air.

XVI

IF God as ill a neighbour were
As you or I 'twere much amiss,
Small honour would be either's share:
God leaves us each one as He is.

* Geradheit, Urteil und Verträglichkeit.

XVII

THE Eastern bards, be it confessed,
Outmatch us poets of the West;
Yet in one point we run them hard—
Our hatred of a brother-bard.

XVIII

To o'ertop his fellows—that is each man's bent;
'Tis the world's way at all times, in all lands;
By all means let who will be insolent,
But only in the thing he understands.

XIX

SPARE us, God, Thine anger dire!
The wrens are tuning for the choir.

XX

ENVY would tear itself for spite—
Let it indulge its appetite!

XXI

RESPECTED would you hold your way,
Have bristles set behind, before;
With hawks they chase all kinds of prey;
No, not quite all—not the wild boar.

XXII

To bar my way—their wish and want—
How should it serve the priestling crew?
A thing that can't be seized in front
Will not be known askew.

XXIII

He will acclaim and laud with brightening eyes
A hero, who himself was warrior bold;
A man's true value none will recognize
Who has himself not suffered heat and cold.

XXIV

Do good for good's sake in all purity!
Nothing remains with thee of what thou hast wrought;
And even if it should remain with thee,
Yet with thy children it remaineth not.

XXV

Hide—or be prey of every sorriest thief—
Thy gold, thy setting-forth, and thy belief.

XXVI

How comes it—that where'er we go we hear
So much that's good, so much that's dull and stale?
The youngest to the oldest lend an ear,
And, deeming them their own, the words retail.

XXVII

NEVER be led into the dance
Of controversy without end!
The wise fall into ignorance
When with the ignorant they contend.

XXVIII

" WHY dwells Truth in far-off lands,
Or hides in deep abysses mewed? "
None at the right time understands!
If only then men understood,
Broad Truth were also near our hands,
And Truth were gentle, dear, and good.

XXIX

BUT why would you investigate
Where human kindliness may flow?
Upon the water cast your cate;
The eater, who shall know?

XXX

ONE day I crushed a spider; in my mind
The question rose: Is it well this I have done?
To it, even as to me, hath God assigned
A portion in the breezes and the sun.

XXXI

" DARK is the night; with God is cloudless day."
Why fashioned He not us the selfsame way?

XXXII

WHAT a mixed company life shows!
At the table of God sit friends and foes.

XXXIII

CLOSE-FISTED am I as you say?
Give me the wherewithal to throw away!

XXXIV

SHALL I show the landscape for your behoof?
First, so please you, climb to the roof.

XXXV

WHO holds his peace will by few cares be wrung;
Ambushed the man lies underneath the tongue.

XXXVI

A MASTER with two serving-men
  Is waited on but meanly;
Where dwell two women but and ben
  Are swept not over cleanly.

XXXVII

GOOD people, rest content with this,
  Say only Autos epha!
Why speak of Man and Woman more?
  Adam's the name and Eva! *

XXXVIII

ALOUD, aloft, my thanks to Allah rose!
  Why? Because suffering he set apart
From knowledge. If what the physician knows
  The sick man knew, despair were at his heart.

* An ironical commendation of accepting dogma on authority; *Autos epha*, the Pythagorean *Ipse dixit*. "Adam" and "Eve," humanity presented in traditional dogma as contrasted with humanity independently studied.

XXXIX

THE folly! Every man in turn would still
His own peculiar notions magnify!
If *Islam* mean submission to God's will,
May we all live in Islam, and all die.

XL

EACH man that's born builds a new house—his own;
He passes, leaves it to a second,
Who fits it as the builder never reckoned,
And no one lays the topmost stone.

XLI

THINGS in my house he blames, this visitor,
Endured by me for years, and well he can;
But he had kicked his heels outside the door,
Had I not chosen to endure the man.

XLII

LORD, may this little house
With Thy good pleasure meet!
A greater might be built;
More could not come of it.

XLIII

STILL may this house fresh glory gain,
As ageless seizin handed down!
His honour may the son maintain
As did the father his renown!

XLIV

I SEE for life you are well provided there!
And no one for such gear will do you wrong;
Two friends are yours, and not a single care—
A wine-cup and a little book of song!

XLV

LOKMAN, repulsive to men's eyes,
—Thence named—brought forth things fair and feat!
Not in the cane the sweetness lies;
The sugar, that is sweet.

XLVI

WITH force far-flung the Orient rose,
And passed the Midland Sea! Alone
For him who Hafiz loves and knows
Ring right the songs of Calderon.

XLVII

O Hafiz, from thy songs I learn
The way that poets should be praised!
Behold! to thee I make return,
And nobly let the thanks be raised!

XLVIII

" Why one hand thus of gems bereft,
One to excess bedight? "
Tell me, what business has the left
Save to adorn the right.

XLIX

If the ass of Jesus even
To blessed Mecca should be driven,
He would show no better training
To the last an ass remaining.

L-LI

Dirt that we tread
Is not hardened but spread.
Yet thump it well with sturdy blows
In a fixed mould, to form it grows.

You easily may see such stone,
As pisé 'tis to Europe known.*

LII

You righteous folk, vex not your spirits within
For he who sins not knows when others sin;
But he alone who sins has learnt to tell,
Now first made clear, wherein they have done well.

LIII

" Many have given you of their store
Good things, nor thanks did you impart! "
I am not troubled on this score,
Their gifts live in my heart.

LIV

A good repute see that you earn,
Wisely 'twixt this and that discern;
He who would more than this is lost.

LV

The flood of passion storms in idle strife
Against the unconquerable land;
Poetic pearls it tosses on the strand,
And thus enriches life.

* Foulness, for example, as presented in a newspaper, contrasted with foulness as in Rabelais.

LVI

From him alone who feels that he is free
Boasting of bonds like these is fitly heard
And he who gaily sports with the absurd
Alone wears the absurd becomingly.

LVII

Confidant

Thou hast granted many a man's desire
Even when thine interest it has crossed;
Little does this good man require,
And free from danger as from cost.

Vizier

Little does this good man require,
But if I granted his desire
Upon the moment he were lost.

LVIII

A sorry thing, yet seen once and again,
When Truth draws on behind, in Error's train;
'Tis her good pleasure often, all the same
And who will question with so fair a dame?
But if Sir Error with Dame Truth should close,
Sadly the lady it would discompose.

LIX

KNOW, 'tis to me a grievous thing
The countless troop that say and sing.
Songcraft—who drive it from the land?
The singing-band!

VII

TIMUR NAMEH

BOOK OF TIMUR

I

The Winter and Timur

So around them closed the winter
With resistless fury. Scattering
Midst them all his icy breathings.
Winds he lashed from every quarter
As a hostile troop against them;
Over them gave power tyrannic
To his frost-fanged storm and tempest.
Down he came to Timur's council,
Shrilled his threat and spake on this wise:
" Slack and slow, O man forbidden,
Be thy march, unrighteous tyrant!
Longer yet shall hearts be wasted,
Scorching in thy flames and burning?
Art thou of the damnèd spirits
One? Behold, I am the other.
Hoar of head art thou; I likewise;
Stark we make the land and mortals.

Mars thou art; I am Saturnus,
Stars that strike with baneful influence,
Dreadfullest in their conjunction.
Souls thou slayest; airs of heaven
Dost thou freeze; my airs are colder
Than thou e'er canst be. Thy savage
Host, they martyrize the faithful
With a thousand several tortures.
Well, in these my days, God grant it,
Direr ill shall be discovered.
I, by God, in nought will spare thee!
Let God hear what gift I proffer!
Ay, by God, from death's cold shudder
Nought, O greybeard, shall defend thee,
Not the broad hearth's glow of fuel,
Not the flame-leaps of December." *

II

To Zuleika

To flatter thee with incensed air,
Thy mounting pleasure to complete,
A thousand rosebuds opening fair
Must shrink and shrivel in the heat.

* December 1814. From Sir W. Jones' version of an Arabic biography of Timur; applied to Napoleon's Russian campaign.

One little phial, at whose lips
  Agelong the snared scent lies enfurled,
And slender as thy finger-tips,
  —To compass this demands a world:

A world of living motions fine,
  Which, in their passionate press and throng,
The bulbul's coming notes divine,
  And all his soul-awakening song.

Why with their griefs be over gloomed
  If joy through perished things soar free?
Were not a myriad souls consumed
  To stablish Timur's tyranny? *

* Wiesbaden, 27th May 1815; the last stanza probably added to justify its insertion in the Book of Timur.

VIII

SULEIKA NAMEH

BOOK OF ZULEIKA

I thought in the night
That I saw the moon in sleep;
But when my sleep took flight
Ah! the unimagined sun's upleap.*

I

Invitation

Seek not to outspeed the day:
For the day you hold in chase
Will not show a fairer face;
But if gladly here you bide,
Where I have put the world away,
To draw it closer to my side,
Like content we each shall borrow:
To-day's to-day, the morrow morrow,
And what succeeds and what is past
Nor drives time on, nor stays its haste;
Stay, best-belov'd, that I receive it,
You who bring the gift and give it.†

* 1814. From Sultan Selim I. † 1814.

II

THAT, charmed, Zuleika upon Jussuf hung
Is no such marvellous case;
Young was he, youth is warranty for grace,
Fair was he, shaped, they say, all hearts to mad,
And she was fair, each could make other glad.
But that thou—O thou, waited for so long,
On me shouldst let youth's eyes of passion rest,
Shouldst love me now, hereafter make me blest,
Such wonder must my songs acclaim:
For me Zuleika ever be thy name.*

III

Now that Zuleika is thy name
I should also named be.
When thy beloved thou dost acclaim
Hatem—that the name shall be.
'Tis but to have me known aright,
And no presumption shall there be;
Who names himself St George's Knight
Pretends not like St George to be.
Not Hatem Thai, who every gift could give,
I, in my poverty, can be;
Not Hatem Zograi, wealthiest that did live
Of all the poets, might I be;

* Eisenach, 24th May 1815.

Yet up to both mine eyes to lift—
That shall not wholly blameful be;
To take bliss and to give the gift,
Will ever noble joyance be.
Self-love in joy's exchange—sweet thrift—
Rapture of Paradise shall be! *

IV

HATEM

IT is not Opportunity
  Makes thieves, herself she heads the roll;
For from my heart, its treasury,
  All that was left of love she stole.

To thee the spoil she has consigned,
  The sum of all my life had won;
So now, made poor, I look to find
  My very life from thee alone.

But even already pity charms
  Those lustrous eyes to which I sued,
And I may welcome in thine arms
  The fortune of my life renewed. †

* This Ghazel is of the same date as the last.
† 12th September 1815.

V

ZULEIKA

SINCE of my joys your love is chief,
I chide not Opportunity;
For if with you she played the thief,
How has her booty gladdened me.

But wherefore "theft"? Of free choice give
Yourself to me! though for my part
Too willingly would I believe—
Yes, I am she who stole your heart.

What you have given thus freely brings
Noble return, to match your stake—
My rest, my opulent life; these things
I joy to give; 'tis yours to take!

Mock not! No word of being "made poor!"
Are we not rich, of love possessed?
I hold you in my arms, and sure
Such fortune reckons with the best.*

VI

THE man who loves will never go astray,
Though shadows close around him and above,
Leila and Medschnun, if they rose to-day,
From me might understand the path of love.†

* Marianne von Willemer's reply to the last; 10th September 1815.
† January 1815. From Saadi.

VII

Is it possible, sweet love, I hold thee close!
Hear the divine voice pealing, musical!
Always impossible doth seem the rose,
And inconceivable the nightingale.*

VIII-IX

ZULEIKA

ON the Euphrates voyaging,
Into the hollows of the wave
From off my finger fell the ring
Of gold you lately gave.

So dreamed I. The red dawn of day
Flashed on mine eyes, through leaves, a beam;
Say, then, poet, prophet, say
What signifies the dream.†

HATEM

INTERPRET this! In truth I can:
Have I not often by your side
Told how the Doge Venetian
Maketh the sea his bride?

* Same date as last. † 17th September 1815.

The ring in the Euphrates fell
From off your finger even so.
Ah! thousand songs celestial,
Sweet dreams, from thee shall flow!

But I, from farthest Hindustan,
Made for Damascus, hoping there
With the next starting caravan,
Toward the Red Sea to fare.

Your stream, the grove, the terrace, this,
Has bound me to, as wedded mate;
Here shall my spirit, till love's last kiss,
To you be dedicate.*

X

SKILLED am I to read men's glances;
One says—" Ah, I love, I suffer!
Live in longing, live despairing! "
And what more a maiden knoweth.
All such speech can nought avail me,
All such speech unmoved must leave me;
But, my Hatem, these your glances
Give the day its gleam and glory.
For they say, " She yonder glads me,
As nought else on earth can gladden;
Lo, I look on roses, lilies,

* The Gerbermühle is the scene.

Pomp and wealth of every garden,
Look on cypress, myrtle, violets,
Sprung to adorn the world with beauty,
And adorned she stands a marvel,
Compassing us with sweet surprises,
Quickening us, restoring, blessing,
So that health returns upon us,
And we sigh again for sickness."
Then you looked upon Zuleika,
And in sickness found a healing,
In your healing found a sickness,
Smiled and turned your eyes upon her,
As you never smiled on others.
And Zuleika felt the glance's
Ever-living speech—" She glads me
As nought else on earth has gladdened."

XI

Gingo Biloba

This tree, entrusted by the East
  Unto my garden-ground, doth show
A leaf whose hidden sense can feast
  Their hearts who are skilled to know.

Is it one living being that doth
  One life through dear division run?
Or are these two, self-chosen, and both
  Fain to be known as one.

The meaning true I well divine
Whereby to make such riddles plain;
Feelest thou not in these songs of mine
That I am one and twain.*

XII

ZULEIKA

MUCH have you sung, be it confessed,
And here or there the verse addressed,
Penned in your own rare charactery,
With pomp of binding, marge of gold,
Faultless each point and stroke inscrolled,
Ay, many a tome to allure the eye;
Say, did not each such missive prove,
Whatever sent, a pledge of love?

HATEM

Yes, and in sweet and potent eyes,
Wreathed smiles, foretelling ecstasies,
In dazzling teeth of youthful pride,
In eyelash-dart and snaky tress
Fallen o'er a bosom's loveliness,
Thousandfold danger may be spied.
Think then how long since, think and guess,
Zuleika has been prophesied.†

* Gingo Biloba, a Japanese tree with a double leaf. In September 1815 Goethe sent one of the leaves to Marianne.

† Heidelberg, 22nd September 1815.

XIII

ZULEIKA

THE sun ascends! A glorious apparition!
And see the clasping crescent round it bow;
Who could unite the pair in sweet fruition?
How shall the riddle be expounded? How?

HATEM

The Sultan could, who wedded mate with mate,
The lordliest pair, rulers of sea and land,
That he his chosen ones might decorate,
Valiantest warriors of a faithful band.

Be this an image of the joy we have won!
Herein I see refigured me and thee;
Me, my beloved, thou hast named thy sun;
Come, give it proof, sweet moon, enclasping me! *

XIV

COME, dearest, come, wind round my brow this band!
Thy fingers only make the turban fair.
Abbas, on Iran's throne of high command,
Ne'er had his head enwound with comelier gear!

* 22nd September 1815. Marianne had bought a Turkish sun and moon order at the Frankfurt fair as a gift for Goethe.

From Alexander's head the turban's fold
In lovely knots and coilings fell;
And they who followed him, great lords of old,
As kingly decking liked it well.

Our Emperor's brow wears this adornment bright
They name it crown—but names may fleet and flow;
Jewels and pearls, let these the eyes delight!
Your muslin ever makes the fairest show.

This, purest white with silver broideries,
Beloved, wind around the brow for me!
And what is lordship? Light on me it lies!
Thou lookest upon me; I am great as he.*

XV

It is but little I demand,
For all things please me, and long while
The little asked for, to my hand
The world has granted with a smile.

Oft sit I in the tavern gay,
And gay beside my modest hearth,
But when I think of thee, straightway
My spirit for conquest sallies forth.

* Weimar, 17th February 1815. On Goethe's birthday, 28th August 1815, Marianne and Rosette Stadel gave Goethe a turban in fulfilment of his poetic wish in this poem.

The realm of Timur thou shouldst wield,
His victor host should follow thee,
Badakschan should its ruby yield,
Its turquoise the Hyrcanian sea.

Thine the dried fruit, all honey-sweet,
Plucked in Bokhara, sunlit-land,
And thousand gracious verses writ
On leaves of silk from Samarcand.

And there well-pleased shouldst thou o'er read
What goods from Ormuz I consigned,
And how the whole machine of trade
Moves but toward thee its goal to find;

Shouldst read of lands where Brahmans bide,
And myriad fingers ply the loom,
That Hindostan's whole pomp and pride
For thee on wool and silk may bloom.

They search the streams of Sumbulpore
To make her glorious whom I love,
Drift, boulder, gravel, grit explore,
Washing for diamond treasure-trove.

The divers, many a venturous man,
Snatch from the gulf the pearls, their prize,
And craftsmen keen, a skilled divan,
Busied for thee the chain devise.

If but Bassora last will add
  Incense and spice—no other thing
Of all that makes the wide world glad,
  For thee the caravan can bring.

Yet all such royal treasures shown,
  End in distraction of the sight!
Hearts that love truly find alone
  Each in the other their delight.*

XVI

Could I ever hesitate,
  Balch, Bokhara, Samarcand,
All their stir and idle state,
  Sweet, to offer to thy hand.

Go and ask the Emperor
  If cities can be given and got;
He is wiser, lordlier,
  How men love he knoweth not.

Mighty Lord, thy hand is stayed,
  Gifts like these thou puttest by;
One should have as sweet a maid,
  Be a beggar poor as I.†

* ? 17th March, 17th May 1815. † 17th February 1815.

XVII

To Zuleika

My sweetest child, pearls strung arow,
Far as my power to give might prove,
Fondly on thee did I bestow,
As wick to bear the flame of love.

And now thou comest, and on thy breast
Of all abraxas of its kind
There hangs that sign which, I protest,
Is the most alien to my mind.

Couldst thou to me at Shiraz bring
This wholly modern foolery,
Stick crossed on stick, and must I sing
This in its cold rigidity?

Abraham the Lord of every star
As his divine forefather chose;
Moses, where spread the wastes afar,
Through one sole God to greatness rose.

David, who many a time had erred,
Yea, wrought foul deeds, when all was done
Knew to absolve him with the word—
I have borne me loyal to the *One*.

Jesus in silence His pure heart
With thought of one sole God did fill;
They who Himself to God convert
Do outrage to His holy will.

Mohammed also—that which won
His triumphs needs must seem as true—
Through the idea of the *One*
Alone did he the world subdue.

And yet if reverence for this thing,
This fatal thing, be thy request,
To salve me the excuse I bring
That not alone thou triumphest.

And yet alone!—As many a score
Of wives drew Solomon from the law,
Strange gods with muttered prayer to adore,
Whom foolish women held in awe.

Throat of Anubis, Isis' horn,
Fronting Judaic dignity,—
So to this god must my heart turn,
This piteous image on the tree!

No better would I seem nor more
Than by the event shall be pronounced,
As Solomon his God forswore
So mine I also have renounced.

But let the renegade's shame be dumb,
And in this kiss lose all its smart:
For Vitziputzli would become
A talisman upon thy heart! *

XVIII

Thou hast smiled to see
The arrogant leaves
In fairest charactery
Made glorious with gold.
Thou dost forgive my boast
Of love thou givest, and through thee
Attainment fortunate,
Thou dost forgive my pleased self-praise.

Self-praise! To the envious man alone a stench,
To friends an odour sweet,
And fragrant to ourselves!
Great is the joy of living;
Greater the joy in life,
When thou, Zuleika, fillest me
With happiness that overflows,
Tossing to me the passion of thy heart
As if it were a ball,

* 1815. Posthumously added to the *Divan*.

That I may catch it there,
And back to thee may toss
All my devoted self—
Ah, what a moment that!
And then I am torn from thee,
Now by the Frank, by the Armenian now.

But days must pass,
Years wear themselves, before I new create
The fulness thousandfold of thy profusion,
Unwind the various-coloured cord
Of this my happiness,
Enlaced with thousand threads
By thee, Zuleika, thee!

Here now, given in exchange,
Are pearls of poetry,
Flung by the mighty surge
On desolated strands of life.
By slender finger-tips
Culled daintily
And strung on jewelled gold,
Place them around thy neck,
Upon thy breast,
Raindrops of Allah these
In modest shell matured! *

* Heidelberg, September 1815.

XIX

Love given for love, and hour for hour exchanged,
Word answering word, and glance to glance replying,
Kiss meeting kiss, from lips that never ranged,
Breath mixed with breath, rapture with rapture vieing!
Thus is it every evening, every morrow!
Yet in each song of mine canst thou not guess
Always a secret sorrow?
Would that the charms of Jussuf I might borrow
As fit return for all thy loveliness! *

XX

Ah, not to me return belongs!
With equal joys I may not bless;
Enough for thee in these my songs,
My heart, my faithfulness!

Delicious art thou as the musk:
Where thou hast been we still have sense of thee. †

* Heidelberg, September 1815.
† Posthumously added to the *Divan*.

XXI

ZULEIKA

THE slave, the lord of victories,
The crowd, whene'er you ask, confess
In sense of personal being lies
A child of earth's chief happiness.

There's not a life we need refuse
If our true self we do not miss,
There's not a thing one may not lose
If one remain the man he is.

HATEM

So it is held, so well may be;
But down a different track I come;
Of all the bliss earth holds for me
I in Zuleika find the sum.

Does she expend her being on me,
Myself grows to myself of cost;
Turns she away, then instantly
I to my very self am lost.

Such day with Hatem all were over;
And yet I should but change my state;
Swift, should she grace some happy lover,
In him I were incorporate.

Fain would I then be—not a rabbi,
That I should hardly bargain for—
But a Firdusi, Motanabbi,
Or at the least the Emperor.*

XXII

Say, 'neath what sign celestial
The day doth lie,
When this fond heart, which yet mine own I call,
No more away shall fly,
Or, flying, may be won by low recall,
Since near me it shall lie?
Upon the pillow, soft and sweet, where all
My heart by hers shall lie.†

XXIII

Hatem

As in the goldsmith's little stall
Gems that flash many a coloured ray,
So pretty maidens gather all
Around the poet well-nigh grey.

* 26th September 1815.
† 8th January 1816. Posthumously added.

Maiden

Again to her your strain belongs,
  Zuleika! her we cannot bear;
Not for yourself but for your songs
  We would—we needs must—envy her.

For were she hideous to behold
  Beauty by you were o'er her shed;
As many a thing of Dschemil old
  And his Boteinah we have read.

But since we are each a pretty maid
  Our portraits we should like to see,
And if you are pleasant at your trade,
  Know we shall pay, and prettily.

Hatem

Come, my brunette! Fair smiles our way!
  Tresses, with little combs and great,
A pure, neat, small head decorate,
  As with the mosque its cupola.

You, little blond one, whom I see
  So spruce, so wholly neat and feat,
You straightway, nor unfittingly,
  Remind us of the minaret.

You there behind them who can use
Eyes of two different sorts, employed
Each separately as you may choose,
You it were well I should avoid.

The lid drooped lightly o'er one eye,
Whelming the pupil from our gaze,
A very rogue of rogues betrays,
Its fellow looks all honesty.

If that should fling the hook and wound,
This as a healer, succourer, shows;
None call I fortunate but those
With whom such twofold glance is found.

So could I praise you one and all,
With your whole tribe grow amorous,
Since in extolling I recall
The Mistress, and portray her thus.

MAIDEN

The poet would be willing slave,
For mastery doth from slavery spring,
But greater joy he cannot have
Than if his Love, herself, should sing.

Has she, then, lordship over song,
The very song that sways our lips?
Indeed it breeds suspicion strong
That oft she moves in dark eclipse.

HATEM

Ah, what she can achieve who knows?
Who knows a mystery so profound?
A song born of the heart outflows
On lips spontaneous to resound.

Songstresses all, whoe'er ye be,
None equals her who soars above,
For she doth sing to pleasure me,
You but yourselves can sing and love.

MAIDEN

See, see now! Of the Houris one
Here have you feigningly set forth!
All may be true, if only none
Plumed her as Houri on this earth.*

XXIV

HATEM

RINGLETS, lo! your captive here,
Held in the circuit of a face!
Ah, sweet serpents, brown and dear,
I can give you back no grace.

* Meiningen, October 1815.

Save a heart's unaltering glow,
  One bright bloom of earliest leaves,
Underneath the mists and snow
  For your sake an Etna heaves.

As sombre mountain walls the beauty
  Of morn will flush, you bring me shame,
And once more is known to Hatem
  Springtime's breath and summer's flame.

Here! yet another flask, I pray!
  To her I drink! If she should see
A little heap of ashes grey,
  She'll say—" He was consumed for me! " *

XXV

ZULEIKA

NEVER would I lose thee! Love
  Gives strength to love. Thy truth
And might of passion may it prove
  The splendour of my youth.
Ah, when men praise my poet thus
  What flattery to my heart!
For life is love, and genius
  Is life's diviner part.†

* Heidelberg, 30th September 1815. In stanza 3, line 1, *Morgenröthe* requires the rhyme *Göthe* in line 3, so above "beauty" *Hatem* takes the place of *Göthe* with the loss of the rhyme.

† By Marianne von Willemer.

XXVI

SWEET, vermeil lips, count it as shame
To curse love's importunities!
Has grief of love another aim
Than what shall heal and ease?

Are your love and you apart
Far as East from West? The heart,
Swift runner, o'er the waste will start.
'Tis its own guide, go where it may;
Bagdad for lovers lies not far away.*

XXVII

YOUR shattered world forever sighs
To win its lost integrity!
They beam on me, those luminous eyes,
This heart, it beats for me! †

O why so many a sense to inform the mind!
Crowding reports confuse the ecstasy;
I fain were deaf whene'er I look on thee,
Whene'er I hear thee, blind.

---

* Both from Oriental suggestions
† Added in 1827; written 1815 (?)

So far from thee, yet art thou near!
Comes unforeseen the sudden pain—
There swift I hear thy voice again,
At once again thou art there!

XXVIII

Banished from day, bereft of light,
How dwell in joyance still?
But now my wish it is to write,
To drink I have no will.

If to her side she drew me, speech
Was all unwonted then,
And as the tongue stood still with each,
So now stands still the pen.

Courage, dear cupbearer! now pour
One glass—no word! no tone!
I say, " Remember," nothing more;
And all I wish is known.*

XXIX

When I remember thee,
Saki straight questions me:

* 1st October 1815.

" Why so mute, Master dear?
Now that thy wisdom's lore,
And gladly more and more,
Thy cupbearer would hear."

When I forget me
Under the cypress-tree
Small store sets he thereon;
Yet in my silent lair
I am as wise and ware
As was King Solomon.*

XXX

She who loves speaks

The chief of the horsemen
Why sends he no courier
As day follows day?
His horses are many,
He knoweth to write.

Yes, he writeth in Talik,
In Neski is skilful,
With daintiest letters
On pages of silk.
Would that his writing
Were here in his room.

* Heidelberg, September or October 1815. *Saki*, Persian for *cupbearer*, here used as a proper name.

The ailing one will not,
She will not have healing,
So sweet is her pain;
She, for whom tidings
Brought from her lover
Were healing, lies sick.*

XXXI

SHE WHO LOVES SPEAKS AGAIN

DOES he write in Neski,
Truth stands clear in sight;
Does he write in Talik,
'Tis for my delight:
One is as the other,
Enough, he loves! †

XXXII

BOOK OF ZULEIKA

GLAD were I in this book to bind my sheaf
Close-compassed, as with others I have done.
But how resolve to shorten word or leaf,
When love's sweet madness draws me on and on? ‡

* Posthumously inserted (1837). *Talik* and *Neski*, two modes of handwriting.

† Also added in 1837 : *see* last note.

‡ Added in 1827.

XXXIII

THERE, on the laden sprays,
Look, dearest, where is seen
The fruit that hangs and sways,
In prickly shell and green.

Ensphered, unconscious, still,
Longtime it hangs on high,—
A bough, at its sweet will,
Rocking it patiently.

Yet ripens and increases
Ever the kernel brown,
It longs to feel the breezes,
And look upon the sun.

The shell bursts; from its tether
Joyous it drops and free;
So, for thy lap to gather,
Fall these my songs to thee.*

XXXIV

ZULEIKA

BY the glad fountain did I stand,
Where netted threads of water play;

* Heidelberg, 24th September 1815.

What held me fast I could not say,
But there in tracery of thy hand
My cipher, lightly drawn, was shown—
Down looked I, ah, with heart thine own!

Where the canal ends, and the main
Alley is set with trees a-row,
I lift mine eyes once more, and lo!
In delicate carven lines again,
The letters of my name are shown—
Ah, stay, ah, stay, with heart mine own!

HATEM

Still may the cypresses confess
To thee, the water leaping, flowing,
From Zuleika to Zuleika
Is my coming, and my going.*

XXXV

ZULEIKA

SCARCE have I thee again, nor long
Regaled thy sense with kiss and song,
But mute and self-involved thou art.
What cramps, weighs down, perturbs thy heart?

* Heidelberg, 22nd September 1815.

Hatem

Zuleika, must I tell this thing?
Not praise, alas, complaint I bring!
Erewhile my songs were all thy store,
New ever, ever sung once more.

These songs, though I should call them good,
Even so, what do they but intrude?
Not those of Hafiz nor Nisami,
Not of Saadi, not of Jami.

The elder choir to me are known,
Word by word and tone by tone,
Ne'er from my memory outworn;
But these are latter songs new-born.

These were made but yesterday,
Hast thou given new pledges, say?
Dost thou with gay audacity
Breathe an alien breath toward me?

Who thus thy spirit can animate?
Who in love's region soars elate?
Who lures, conjures to union thus
In song as mine harmonious?

ZULEIKA

Far, and long time, went wandering
Hatem; the maiden learnt a thing;
So sweetly he sung her in his hour,
Now severance must approve its power;
Not strange in truth should seem a line;
They are Zuleika's, they are thine! *

XXXVI

BEHRAMGUR first discovered rhyme, men say;
Stress of pure joy through speech deliverance found;
Dilaram, consort of his hours, straightway
Replied with kindred word and echoing sound.

So, dearest, you were parted from my side,
That rhyme's sweet usage should become my own,
Unenvious I even of the Sassanide,
Behramgur; mine the art has also grown.

This book you awaked; it is a gift from you;
My full heart spake, for joy was at its prime;
From your sweet life rang back the answer true,
As glance to glance so rhyme replied to rhyme.

* 7th October 1815.

Now let these accents reach you from afar;
The word arrives, though tone and sound disperse;
Is it not the mantle sown with many a star?
Is it not love's high-transfigured universe? *

XXXVII

To yield me to that glance of thine,
To yield, by lips and breast coerced,
To listen to thy voice divine,
Was my last pleasure and the first.

Ah, 'twas the last on yesternight!
Then lamp and fire for me were lost;
Each sportive word, my soul's delight,
Grew burdened as with crime or cost.

Till upon Allah's lips the word
To reunite our lives appears,
Sun, moon and world to me afford
But opportunity for tears.†

XXXVIII

Nay, let me weep, girdled by night,
In boundless wilderness!
The camels rest, their drivers are asleep,
The Armenian watches, silent, reckoning;

* May 1818. † September 1815.

And I, beside him, reckon o'er the miles
That part me from Zuleika, and repeat
The irksome windings of a lengthening way.

Nay, let me weep! Tears bring no shame;
The men who weep are good;
Achilles wept for sake of his Briseis!
Xerxes bewept the yet unslaughtered host.
Beside the favourite he himself had slain
Did Alexander weep.
Nay, let me weep! Tears animate the dust.
Already mist exhales.*

XXXIX

ZULEIKA

WHAT means the stirring? Does it bring—
  This breeze-glad tidings from the East?
The quickening motion of its wing
  Fans cool a deeply-wounded breast.

Now with the dust it fondly sports,
  Light clouds upwhirled it holds in chase,
And to their trellised safe resorts
  Drives the gay insect populace.

* Posthumously added (1837).

It lightens the sun's fiery stress,
  Cools my hot cheeks, and in its flight
Kisses the vines that bravely dress
  With vintage-pomp the field and height.

A thousand greetings from my friend
  Are in its gentle whisperings told;
Ere shadows on these hills descend
  Kisses shall greet me thousandfold.

So, wind, speed onward! Aid bestow
  On friends and folk from joy removed!
There yonder, where the high walls glow,
  Soon shall I find the well-beloved.

Ah, the true tidings of the heart,
  The breath of love, the bliss to live,
To me no lips save his impart,
  To me no breath save his can give.*

XL

Lofty Imagery

The Sun, the Helios of the Greeks,
  Drives glorious up the heavenly height;
Conquest o'er all the world he seeks,
  Gazing around, below, forthright.

* By Marianne von Willemer, anticipating a meeting with Goethe at Heidelberg, 23rd September 1815.

The cloud-born goddess, child divine
Of heaven, he sees her tearful face,
For her alone he seems to shine,
Blind to the glad ethereal space.

Shuddering with pain he sinketh low,
Ampler her gush of weeping is;
He flings a joyance o'er her woe,
And for each pearl gives kiss on kiss.

Now deep she feels his glance's might,
And motionless she looks on high;
The pearls would shape themselves aright
For each has caught his effigy.

So, wreathed with colour and the bow,
Lightens her countenance joy-fraught;
He fronts her, fain toward her would go,
Yet, yet alas! attains her not.

Thus by the pitiless law of fate,
Beloved, thou from me art flown;
And were I Helios the great,
What should avail my chariot-throne? *

* Weimar, 7th November 1815.

XLI

Reverberation

What pomp of phrases when the poet
Likens him to the Emperor, to the Sun!
Yet his sad face, he dare not show it,
Gliding through darkness lone.

Whelmed by the clouds, in bars and streaks,
Sank nightward the pure blue of day;
Pallid and lean have grown my cheeks,
And my heart's tears are grey.

Leave me not thus to night, to sorrow,
My best-beloved, my moon-face bright!
O thou my lamp, my star of morrow,
O thou my sun, my light! *

XLII

Zuleika

Ah, West-wind, for thy dewy wing
How sorely must I envy thee!
For tidings thou to him canst bring
Of grief his absence lays on me.

* Same day as the last; suggestion from Hafiz.

The wavings of thy pinions light
Wake silent yearning in the heart;
From flowers and eyes, from wood and height,
Breathed on by thee, the quick tears start.

Yet these soft wanderings of thy breath
Cool my hurt eyelids and restore;
Ah, I should faint with pain to death
Hoped I not sight of him once more.

Haste then to my belovèd, haste,
Speak to his heart in gentlest strain;
No shade across his spirit cast,
And hide, ah, hide from him my pain!

Tell him, but tell with lips discreet,
His love's the life by which I live!
Glad sense where life with love shall meet
His nearness to my heart will give.*

XLIII

REUNION

MY star of stars, is it possible
I press thee to my breast again!
That night of absence, dark it fell,
Ah, what abyss! what bitter pain!

* By Marianne von Willemer: in stanza 2 "eyes," *Augen*, is probably right, but many editions read *Auen*, meadows (near water).

Yes, it is thou, beloved one,
Foe to my joys, sweet foe and dear!
With memory of my griefs foregone
I shudder now that thou art near.

When buried deep the whole world lay
In God's eternal breast, elate
He summoned forth the primal day,
Urged by the rapture to create.
He spake the fiat—" Let there be! "
And with a dolorous " Alas! "
Forth into actuality
Outbrake the mighty, labouring mass!

Light broadened in the firmament,
The darkness shrank with timorous start,
And straightway every element,
Each from the other, drew apart.
And swift, in wildered dream, from thence
Each drove towards the void around,
Dead matter in a space immense,
Without a sigh, without a sound.

Silence o'er all! A waste forlorn!
Then first God felt his solitude,
And waked to life the roseate morn;
Pity for woe her heart indued;
She from the murk and shadow drew
Colours, a soft harmonious play,
And things had power to love anew
Which each from each had fallen away.

To seek what is its own of right
Doth every sundered atom yearn,
And to a life that is infinite
The heart and eyes illumined turn.
Grasped sure, snatched swift, alike their state,
If each the other hold enfurled;
No need has Allah to create,
'Tis we ourselves create his world.

So I, on morning's wings in flight,
To thy dear lips was swept along,
And with a thousand seals the night
Star-sown our covenant makes strong;
Patterns in us two earth shall see,
Alike in pleasure and in pain,
Nor shall a second " Let there be! "
Divide a second time us twain.*

XLIV

Night of the Full Moon

Mistress, what means this whispering, say;
Why the light quiver of your lips?
And still your murmur on the air,
Sweeter than wine a feaster sips!
Think you to those twinned lips you may
Allure another pretty pair?
" I am fain to kiss, to kiss, said I! "

* 24th September 1815, at Heidelberg, after Marianne's arrival. Goethe's theory of colours is involved in stanza 4.

There through the dubious dusk how bright
Glows every blossomed bough! Behold,
How downward plays star following star!
Carbuncle-flashes thousandfold
Turn emerald through the leaves a-light;
Yet heedless roams your spirit afar.
" I am fain to kiss, to kiss, said I! "

Your distant lover, he too knows
With sense like yours this bitter-sweet,
Feels too the aching in the bliss;
On the full moon to gaze and greet
Sometime ye made your holy vows.
This is the hour! the moment this!
" I am fain to kiss, to kiss, say I! " *

XLV

Cipher

Strive in your tasks appointed,
O diplomats, nor spare!
Counsel your chiefs anointed
With counsel wise and ware;
The world's employ be sending
Dark ciphers, soon and late,
Till whirling change have ending,
And crooked be made straight.

* 18th September 1815; suggestion from Hafiz, as indicated Marianne in a cipher letter.

To me a Mistress tender
This cipher here has sent;
Glad am I, for the sender
Our art did first invent;
'Tis love's full tide in regions
Where every sight is fair,
A gracious, true allegiance
Grown betwixt me and her.

It is a nosegay swelling
With myriad blossoms pied,
A happy, populous dwelling,
Where angel spirits abide;
A heaven it is abounding
With birds of plumage rare,
A sea with song resounding,
Blown o'er by balmiest air.

Yearnings no bounds could narrow
Are here in secret writ,
Which in life's pith and marrow,
As shaft on shaft, have hit.
This I have told you ever
Was long our pious due;
The art if you discover
Be mute, and use it too! *

* 21st September 1815. The cipher used by Goethe and Marianne was carried on by references to passages of Hafiz.

XLVI

Reflection

A mirror's mine wherein I glance
  Gladly as if upon
My breast with double brilliance
  The Emperor's order shone;
Not that with fond self-pleasing eye
  I seek me everywhere,
But loving well society,
  And sure to find it there.

Through the hushed, widowed house I go,
  Then toward the mirror move,
And ere I think to find me, lo,
  Forth peeps my little Love!
I turn me round in haste, but fled
  Is she I saw so plain;
Then in my songs I look instead,
  And straight she is there again!

And ever fairer songs I write,
  And to my liking more;
In scorner's and in critic's spite
  Each day's gain tell I o'er.

With costliest work her picture bordered
Grows statelier to the eye,
In golden wreath of roses ordered,
And frame of azure dye.*

XLVII

ZULEIKA

SONG, with what inmost happiness
Thy sense upon my heart doth bide!
Sweetly thou seemest to confess
That I am at his side;

That to his thought I am always near,
That he doth send from ways remote
The blessing of his love to her,
Who yields a life devote.

Yes, friend, my heart—thy glass—reveals
Thyself to thee in this my breast.
Whereon thou hast set thy faithful seals,
Kiss upon kiss impressed.

Sweet fancyings, clearest truth—they wove
Round me a chain of sympathy,
The pure embodied light of love,
In garb of poesy.†

* ? 26th October 1815. Stanza 2, "widowed house" has no reference to the death of Goethe's wife, which occurred at a date later than the poem. The "mirror" is a symbol of the poems of the *Divan*.

† Marianne's reply to the last; rehandled by Goethe.

XLVIII

LEAVE Alexander his world-mirror! What
The sights it showed? Far off and yet more far
Races of tranquil men the conqueror sought
To harry with the rest in desperate war.

But thou no further nor toward strange things strive!
Sing me the spoils that song has made thine own.
Think only that I love thee, that I live,
Think of thy might and of my heart o'erthrown.*

XLIX

FAIR is the world to view, go where we may;
The poet's world fairer and lovelier seems;
On the pranked fields, sun-bright or silver-grey,
Morn, noon and night what lights! what wandering gleams!
Now all shows glorious; if it would but stay!
I look through love's perspective-glass to-day.†

L

No more on silken leaf
Write I symmetric rhymes;

* Inserted in 1827. † 7th February 1815.

No more encircle them
With golden tendrils;
Traced in the dust that has no fixity,
The wind sweeps o'er them; but their virtue stays,
Charmed to the soil,
Down to the fixèd centre of the earth.
Here will the wanderer come,
The lover. If he tread
This spot, a quiver thrills
Through all his limbs:—
" Here before me some lover loved.
Was it Medschnun, the tender?
Ferhad, the mighty? Dschemil, the unchanging?
Or one of all those thousands,
The fortunate-unfortunate?
He loved! Like him I love,
His presence I divined."
But thou, Zuleika, now
Dost rest on that soft pillow
Which I disposed for thee, which I made fair.
Waking, thou too art thrilled through every limb;—
" It is he, he calls me, Hatem.
And I, I call thee too, O Hatem! Hatem." *

* Posthumously added (1837).

LI

THYSELF in thousand forms thou mayst conceal,
Yet all-belovèd, straight thou art known to me;
Thou mayst fling over thee some magic veil,
Thou, the All-present, straight art known to me.

In the young cypress's most pure aspiring,
All-burgeoning-beauty, straight thou art known to me;
In the canals' pure life of waves untiring,
Thou, All-caressing, straight art known to me.

If beamlike flung in air the fount escape,
How gladly, All-sportive, thou art known to me;
If the cloud shape itself but to reshape,
All man-fold, in it thou art known to me.

In the pied carpet of the meadow shining,
All-diverse-starred, how fair thou art known to me;
Does ivy fling her thousand arms entwining,
O All-embracing, there thou art known to me.

When on the mount morn kindles, thou straightway,
The All-rejoicing, greeted art by me;
When o'er me deepens the pure dome of day,
All-heart-dilating, thou art breathed by me.

What lore through outward sense or inward came,
Through thee, All-lessening, has been known to me;
And Allah's hundred names if I should name,
A name for thee with each would sound to me.*

* 14th March 1815. The Ghazel is a litany of love parallel to the invocation of Allah by his ninety-nine other names.

IX

SAKI NAMEH

BOOK OF THE CUPBEARER

I

YES, in the tavern I too have been seated,
For me, as for the rest, the wine was meted;
They prattled, cried, dealt with the hour's affair,
Were glad or sad with each day's joy or care;
But I, rejoicing in my inmost heart,
With thought of my beloved, sat apart.
How does she love? I am not well aware;
But what should trouble me? my soul I gave
Constant to one, would hang on her a slave!
Where was the parchment, where the style, to show
All that lay in me? Yet 'twas so! ay, so! *

II

I SIT alone;
Are luckier quarters known?
Wine—better none—
I drink alone;

* Before 27th September 1815.

No man sets bounds to me;
So move my own thoughts free.*

Muley the thief, attained a point so rare
He wrote when drunk, and every letter fair.

III

If from Eternity the Koran be—
Of that inquire I not.
If one of God's created things it be—
That truly know I not.
That the Koran the Book of books must be,
I hold as faith to duteous Moslems taught.
But that wine from Eternity must be,
On that head doubt I not.
Created ere the angels? That may be,
And no mere poet's tale with fable fraught,
The drinker sure, however this may be,
Looks in God's face, to livelier joyance wrought.†

IV

Drunk we must be, nor one escape!
Youth's drunkenness without the grape;
If the old men drink back youth, why thus
The virtue of it shows marvellous;
Sweet life has a care black cares to muster,
And the ruiner of care's is the vine-tree's cluster.‡

* Before 21st June 1818. † 20th May 1815.
‡ Before 30th May 1815.

No place for question on that head!
Sternly is wine prohibited.
But if it must be drunk, at least
Drink only what is of the best!
Damned for poor stuff that turns you sick
Were to be twice a heretic.*

Say with what wine
His drunken joys did Alexander take?
My latest spark of life I'd stake,
'Twas not as good as mine.

Wine can't agree with you—no question;
The doctor's silence meant " Abstain ";
A little only spoils digestion,
Too much would heat the brain.

Do you then know my darling's name?
Do you know what vintage I acclaim?

V

WHILE one is sober
Things ill may delight,
When one has drunken
He knows what is right;

* Before 30th May 1815.

Only excess comes,
And quickly, 'tis true;
O Hafiz, instruct me,
How seemed it to you?

Nor flies it too high
The belief I maintain;
He that's no drinker
From love should refrain;
But, you drinkers, o'errate not
Yourselves on this score,
He that's no lover
Should drink nevermore.*

VI

ZULEIKA

WHY these ungracious airs you often show?

HATEM

The body is a prison-house, you know;
Within it was the free soul lured to come,
There where it cannot get bare elbow-room.
Would it escape and wander free again,
Round even the prison they enmesh a chain;
Poor soul! she thus is doubly wronged and cumbered,
And hence her strange demeanour, times unnumbered.†

* 26th July 1814. † 24th May 1814.

VII

If then the body be this prison-house,
Why is the prison eager for carouse?
The soul within is well enough bestead,
Pleased there to stay and keep a sober head;
But now a flask of wine must enter in,
And straight a second follows from the bin.
Until the soul will stand the thing no more,
And smashes them to sherds against the door.*

VIII

To the Tapster

Clown, do not clap the vessel that you bear
In such rough fashion here beneath my nose!
Who serves me wine should smile with gracious air,
Else troubled in the glass the Eilfer grows.†

To the Cupbearer

Come in, come in, my boy so sweet and fair!
Why dost thou stand upon the threshold there?
Thou shalt be my cupbearer from to-night,
So every wine tastes well and sparkles bright.

* 27th May 1814. † *Eilfer*, wine of the year eleven.

IX

The Cupbearer speaks

You, with your tossing ringlets brown,
Sly hussy, hence! off with you now!
When for my master wine I pour
His thanks are kisses on my brow.

But you, I'd wager it, are not
Content with that to make an end;
Those cheeks of yours, your breast, believe,
Will only weary out my friend.

Think you, forsooth, your tricks to try,
That shamefaced thus to flight you take?
Upon the threshold I would lie,
And, if you glide toward him, awake.*

X

Upon the score of drunkenness
They have blamed us many a day,
And long while of our drunkenness
Had not enough to say.
Most folk, in case of drunkenness,
Lie lost till morn is grey,

* Frankfurt, October 1814.

But all the night my drunkenness
  Drove me a wildered way;
It is in truth love's drunkenness
  Which griefs on me doth lay,
From night to day, from day to night
  Thrilling my heart alway.
My heart that in song's drunkenness
  Swells and would flight essay,
Upborne where no tame drunkenness
  Dare soar in rival play,
Love's, Song's, the Winecup's drunkenness,
  Whether come night or day,
Is life's divinest drunkenness,
  Which makes me grieved and gay.

XI

WHERE all good things on earth seem mine,
  There stands my flask of Eilfer;
In Neckar vale, by Main and Rhine
  Smiling they bring me Eilfer.
And many a gallant man they name
  Less often than the Eilfer;
He served his race, yet all the same
  He never could be Eilfer.
Good Princes such repute have had
  Almost as has the Eilfer;
If deeds of theirs have made us glad,
  Huzza! they live in Eilfer.

And many a name I whisper low,
And silent sip my Eilfer;
They know it, if none other know;
Then first tastes right my Eilfer;
Of those my songs in praise they speak
Almost as of the Eilfer;
And flowers and leafy sprays they break
Crowning me and the Eilfer.
All this were blessing rich and rare
(Gladly I'd share the Eilfer)
If Hafis should but take his share,
And quaff with me the Eilfer;
Therefore to Paradise I fleet,
Where ne'er, alas, of Eilfer
The faithful drink! May it be sweet,
Heaven's wine! yet 'tis not Eilfer.
Quick, Hafis, quick, and hasten thence,
A bumper's here of Eilfer.*

XII

You little rogue, you!
That I should keep my senses clear
Concerns me most of all;
And so your presence here
Pleases me well,
My dearest boy,
Drunk though I be.†

* *Eilfer*, wine of the year eleven. Two forms of the verse exist, 1815 and this of 1816. † Added in 1827.

XIII

In the wine-tavern, ere dawn flushed the sky,
What tumult! Host and maids, torches and crowd!
A world of brawling! Insults fly!
Flutes shrill, and tabors rattle loud;
A wild affair! And I, elate of heart
With life and love, taking in all my part.

Men always spy a fault in me, and say
I learn no manners, shun the moral rules;
At least I wisely keep me far away
From wranglings of the doctors and the schools.*

XIV

CUPBEARER

What a plight, master! Late to-day,
And shambling from your room you came:
The Persians call this *Bidamag buden*,
or { *The blues* may be the English name.
{ Caterwauls is the German name.

* First published in 1827.

POET

Dear lad, pray leave me for the present!
To pleasure me the whole world fails,
The flush and fragrance of the roses,
The singing of the nightingales.

CUPBEARER

'Tis this itself that I would treat,
Nor should it prove intractable;
Here! these fresh almonds taste and eat,
And wine once more will relish well!

Then on the terrace I would steep
Your sense in the reviving air,
And in your eyes gaze long and deep,
Till you shall kiss the cupbearer.

Earth's not the cavern you suppose,
With brood and nest 'tis ever gay,
Rose-wafts and attar of the rose,
And bulbul sings as yesterday.*

XV

THIS ill-favoured slut,
The wanton one
They name the World,

* October 1814. Line 4, "Deutsche sagen Katzenjammer" (originally named "Katzenjammer").

Me too she has deceived
Like all the rest.
My faith she robbed me of,
And then of hope
Last, she would filch my love.
But there I broke away,
The treasure I had saved
To make for ever sure,
Wisely I parted it
'Twixt Saki and Zuleika.
Each of the pair
In emulation vies
To pay the higher interest,
Richer than ever have I grown.
Faith have I back again!
Faith in Zuleika's love!
And in the winecup Saki grants to me
Glorious sensation of the present hour;
Here what should hope desire! *

XVI

CUPBEARER

To-DAY of meat you have taken toll,
And drunk a yet more liberal store;
What you forgot into the bowl;
The relics of your feast, I pour.

* Weimar, 25th October 1815.

" Swankin " this mingled draught we name;
The sated guest oft finds it good!
I bear the vessel to my swan,
Who preens his wings to breast the flood.

Yet we are told the singing bird
Doth his own requiem intend;
By me may never song be heard
If so it should presage your end.*

XVII

CUPBEARER

MASTER, they name you the great poet,
When in the market-place you appear;
Gladly I list while you are singing,
When silent, still I lend my ear.

But best I love you for your kiss,
Pledge of remembrance when we part,
For words must pass away, and this
Dwells ever in my inmost heart.

They have their worth, the rhymes which throng;
Hushed thought is better and more dear;
Give then to other folk your song,
Give silence to the cupbearer.†

* October 1814 or a little later. Line 5, " Swankin," *Schwänchen*, on which the play of words turns.

† Same date as last.

XVIII

POET

I'LL have another bowl! Here, skinker!

CUPBEARER

Master, you have had enough. They all
Give you one name now—the wild drinker.

POET

But did you ever see me fall?

CUPBEARER

Mahommed has forbidden.

POET

Rogue,
There's none to hear or take's to task,
I'll tell you.

CUPBEARER

Once you choose to speak,
It is but little I need ask.

POET

In your ear! Moslems such as we
Must bow to abstinence as befits;
While, in his sacred ardour, he
Would choose alone to lose his wits! *

XIX

SAKI

O MASTER, think, 'mid cups and mirth
What glancing flame is round you shed!
A thousand crackling sparks flash forth,
Nor know you where the fire may spread.

Then, when your fist the table smites,
Shavelings in corners I espy,
Who lurk and sneak like hypocrites,
While all your heart doth open lie.

Tell me why youth, not yet made free
From faults of youth, should be more sage,
In virtue's very penury,
More skilled in prudence than old age.

All things, that to the heavens belong
Or earth, to you lie manifest,
Nor care you to conceal the throng
That turmoils ever in your breast.

* 23rd February 1815.

HATEM

Therefore, dear lad, to you be given
  Wisdom with youth; let both endure!
Song is indeed a gift from heaven,
  Yet in the earthly life a lure.

To nurse oneself in secret now,
  Blabbing perpetual ere long!
Discreet a poet cannot grow,
  Song's a betrayal since 'tis song.*

XX

SUMMER NIGHT

Poet

THE sun is set, but still a glow
  Makes bright the west with lingering day;
How long a time, I fain would know,
  Will yet the golden shimmer stay.

Cupbearer

Wait would I, master, if I might,
  Keeping my watch outside this tent,
And when Night queens it o'er the light,
  Come straight and tell you the event.

* Added in 1827.

I know that this o'erhanging sky,
  This infinite, you love to view,
While yonder cressets magnify
  Each one the other in the blue.

And who flames brightest will but say—
  " Here in my allotted place I shine;
Willed God that you a broader ray
  Should cast, your lamps were bright as mine."

Glorious with God is everything,
  Because Himself is best of all;
And so all birds are slumbering,
  Each in his nest, or great or small;

And one, where yonder cypress flings
  A branch, is haply perching too,
Held in the warm wind's leading-strings,
  Till drops thef resh aerial dew.

Such lore you taught me, every word,
  Such lore or other of like kind,
And nothing that I once have heard,
  From you will pass from out my mind.

An owl for your sake, I would cower
  Here on the terrace in the dark,
Till the north constellation's hour,
  With twin revolving, I shall mark.

That will be midnight, when you oft
Rouse me untimely. O my soul!
What pomp when you shall gaze aloft
With me in wonder at the whole!

Poet

True; 'mid the embalmèd garden flowers
Sings Bulbul many a whole night through,
But you might linger all the hours
Ere darkness now its strength could show.

For in these days since Flora came,
Aurora, the grass-widow—thus
The folk of Greece the goddess name—
Burns in her love for Hesperus.

Nay, turn and look! she comes, how swift!
Across the boundless flowery field,
On either hand grows bright the lift,
Yes, night, flung back, is forced to yield.

On light and roseate footing sped,
In vain pursuit she wandereth
Of him, who at the sunrise fled;
Ah, feel you not an amorous breath?

Haste, dearest boy, some deep recess,
With doors made fast, be your defence,
Lest she misdeem your loveliness
For Hesperus; and bear you hence.*

* 16th December 1814.

XXI

The Cupbearer sleepily

Me thy long-hoped-for gift at last contents,
God's presence known in all the elements;
How lovingly thou givest it! yet above
All other things the loveliest is thy love.

Hatem

Sweetly he sleeps, and sleep is fairly earned!
Dear boy, thou hast poured the wine the master drinks,
From friend and teacher, thou, so young, hast learned
Unforced, unpunished, all the old man thinks.
Now the delicious tide of health is flush
In every limb; new life comes momently;
I drink once more; but not a sound! hush! hush!
That, wakening not, I may have joy in thee.*

* Added in 1827.

X

MATHAL NAMEH

BOOK OF PARABLES

I

FROM heaven there fell in the wild, gulfing wave
A tremulous drop, now smit by ocean's wrath.
God, seeing its modest courage, born of faith,
As guerdon meet strength and endurance gave.
Enclosed it lay within a quiet shell;
And now—O high reward! ageless renown!—
A pearl it gleams upon our Emperor's crown,
With lustre soft and eye-beam amiable.*

II

BULBUL sang darkling; through the gusty shower
The song drove on to Allah's throne of light;
In recompense for song of such sweet might
A golden cage shut-fast he made her bower,—
So name our mortal body—and ill at ease
She is, indeed, thus cabined and confined;
But when she ponders with the wiser mind,
Once more the sweet soul sings, and will not cease.†

* Close of 1814 or opening of 1815.
† Between 12th December 1814 and 30th May 1815.

III

Faith in Miracles

Once a fair vase I broke, and nigh
Desperate in my distress,
" Consigned to all the fiends," cried I,
" Be hurry and clumsiness! "
My rage once spent, each sorry sherd
Gathering my tears outburst;
God pitied me, and at a word
'Twas whole as at the first.*

IV

High-born, the loveliest of her clan,
A pearl, the shell set free,
Spake to the jeweller, worthy man:—
" I am lost, am lost! " cried she.
" You pierce me; this fair rounded shape
Must in a trice be shattered;
I, with my sisters, as may hap,
To base things shall be fettered."

" My profit's now my sole concern,
Forgive me and forget;
How, if in this I were not stern,
E'er string the carcanet." †

* Added in 1827; from Chardin's Travels.
† Not later than 30th May 1815.

V

In the Koran, and to my glad surprise,
A peacock's feather lying met mine eyes;
O welcome be thou to the sacred place
Creature of earth, adorned with costliest grace!
From thee as from the stars of heaven we learn
God's greatness in things little to discern;
He, who His worlds o'erlooketh from on high,
Has here impressed the likeness of His eye;
And decked a trivial plume so gloriously
That kings in vain, their splendour to advance,
Might imitate the bird's magnificence.
Meek joyance in fair fame be ever thine,
So art thou worthy of the holy shrine.*

VI

An Emperor had two cashiers,
One for getting, one for spending;
From these hands gold dropped never-ending,
Those knew not where to come by more.
He died who spent; nor knew the monarch which
Servant to fill the place with; ere he found him,
While he had scarcely time to look around him,
He who took in receipts grew hugely rich;
With gold they scarce could move about,
Because for *one* day none was handed out.

* 17th March 1815.

Then first before the Emperor clear it lay
What was to blame for all that went astray;
Well knew he how to profit by the case,
And never after did he fill the place.*

VII

Spake to the kettle the new pot—
" What a black belly you have got! "
'Tis one of our old kitchen ways;
Come, come, my polished idiot,
Soon shall your pride be in worse case!
If your handle show a shining face,
Do not too much lift up your heart,
Look rather to your hinder part! †

VIII

All men, the little and the great,
Keep spinning cobwebs delicate;
Where, in high pomp, with hookèd claws,
They sit at midmost of the gauze.
Let but the besom twirl anon,
They cry—" Unheard of outrage done!
The lordliest palace ruined and gone! " ‡

* 25th February 1815.
† 5th September 1818; added to the Divan in 1827.
‡ 17th March 1815.

IX

THE Gospel script that lives alway
Jesus from heaven descending brought;
He read for young men, night and day;
The word divine struck home and wrought.
To heaven He rose, and bore it hence,
But they had taken it to heart,
And each, as he had caught the sense,
Set it all down part after part;
With variance—doth that signify?
Each had not the like faculty;
Yet every Christian at his need
Till doomsday thence may take and feed.*

X

IT IS GOOD

IN Paradise, where moonbeams played,
Jehovah found in slumber deep
Adam far sunk; and lightly laid
By him a little Eve asleep.
In earthly bounds lay there at rest
Two of God's thoughts—the loveliest!
" Good! "—guerdoning Himself, He cried,
And passed with lingering look aside.

* 24th May 1815.

No wonder at our glad amaze
When eye meets eye in quickening gaze,
As if we had flown through regions far
Near Him to be, whose thoughts we are.
If He should call us, be it so,
Let but the summons be for two!
Held in these arms, thy bounds, there rest
Thou dearest of God's thoughts and best.*

* Same date as the last.

XI

PARSI NAMEH

BOOK OF THE PARSEES

I

Legacy of the old Persian Faith

Brethren, what legacy should you receive
From a poor pious man, now taking leave,
Whom you, his followers, bore with and sustained,
Tending and honouring him while life remained?

When ofttimes we have seen our sovereign ride,
His raiment golden, gold on every side,
Himself and his great lords with jewels bedight,
Sown thick as hailstones, have you at such sight

Never within your breast felt envy rise?
Or did a nobler Presence feast your eyes,
When on the wings of morn you saw ascend,
Above the countless peaks of Darnavend

The sun's bowed rim? What man, if this were shown,
Could stay from gazing? I have known, have known
A thousand times, living so many a day,
My soul, with the sun's coming, borne away.

God to behold enthroned, the King of Kings,
To name him Master of life's fountain-springs
To bear me worthy of such glorious sight,
And forward fare in highway of His light.

And when the fiery disk was full outlined,
I stood as if in darkness, stricken blind,
I smote my breast, and all my life a-glow,
Cast me to earth with forehead bended low.

And now be this a sacred legacy,
Brethren, for your good-will and memory,—
Daily fulfilment of hard services ;
There needs no revelation saving this.

Do innocent hands stir of a babe newborn,
Then to the sun at once the infant turn;
Body and soul dip in the fiery bath;
So of each morning's grace some sense he hath.

To creatures that have life yield up your dead;
Over the beast let marl and clay be spread;
The thing that shall be thought unclean by you,
Far as your power doth reach, that hide from view.

Till, dress, your field to shining cleanliness,
That the sun gladly may your labour bless;
For trees you plant, symmetric rows contrive;
What is well-ordered He permits to thrive.

Water in your canals should never flow
Impure, or languish with a motion slow;
As from its mountain-ranges Senderud
Springs pure, so stainless it should reach the flood.

The soft descent of water not to slack,
Have care with diligence to clear its track;
Reed, sedge, the salamander and the eft,
Creatures deform, see that not one be left.

Water and earth if thus you should refine
The sun throughout the air will gladly shine,
There to bring life, meeting reception due,
And, bringing life, add health and strength thereto.

Thus having tasked yourselves from toil to toil
Take comfort; all your world is free from soil;
And man, advanced to priesthood, has the right
Boldly God's image from the flint to smite.

When the flame leaps, with joy its presence own;
Clear is the night, supple your limbs have grown;
There by the hearth, where fire has virtuous use,
Mellow of beast and plant the sap or juice.

If wood you thither drag, with joy be it done.
You bear the seeds of a terrestrial sun;
If you pluck pambeh say in a neighbour ear—
" This as a wick the holy thing shall bear."

You shall, in every lamp that flameth bright,
Perceive the reflex of a higher light;
Never mishap will come your foot to stay
From honouring God's throne at break of day.

There is our being's seal imperial,
Pure glass of God for us and angels all;
What stammers here in praise of the Most High,
From gyre to gyre is gathered to the sky.

From Senderud's banks my soul is fain to wend,
And beat its wings upward to Darnavend,
With joy to meet the Sun that riseth now,
And thence in blessing over you to bow.*

II

If man this earth of ours holds dear
Because on it the sun doth shine,
If he delight him in the vine
That 'neath the keen knife drops a tear—
Because it feels the ripened juice,
Which doth a flagging world restore,
Will quicken many a power to use,
But haply drown or stifle more—

* 13th March 1815.

He knows how he should thank that glow
Which brings large life to everything;
The stammering sot reels to and fro,
The temperate will rejoice and sing.*

* Eisenach, 24th May 1815.

XII

CHULD NAMEH

BOOK OF PARADISE

I

Foretaste

He, the true Moslem, speaks of Paradise
As though he himself had been among the blest;
Upon the Koran's promise he relies,
Whereon doth all sound doctrine firmly rest.

And yet the Prophet, he who wrote each verse,
From his high place discovers where we ail,
Seeing how, despite the thunders of his curse,
Doubt cruelly wrings our faith and makes it quail.

Therefore he sends from bowers of endless day
Youth's perfect pattern to make all things young;
Hither she hovers, making no delay,
And round my neck the loveliest chains has flung.

Upon my knees, my breast, child of the skies,
I hold her, nor would know a thing save this,
Now having potent faith in Paradise,
Since I would ever give her that long kiss.*

II

Privileged Men

After the Battle of Bedr, under the starry heaven.

Mohammed speaks

The foe may sorrow for his dead,
For they return not with the years;
Lament not ye our brethren sped,
They move above yon glittering spheres.

Their brazen doors the planets seven
To these our fellows have flung wide,
And boldly at the gates of Heaven
Already knock our glorified.

Surprised, o'erjoyed, those glorious things
They find, by me behold in flight,
When on the marvellous horse with wings
Instant I pierced heaven's highest height.

*23rd April 1820.

The trees of wisdom spiring vast,
Lift their gold apples to the air,
The trees of life broad shadows cast
O'er blossomed seats and herbage fair.

And now a sweet wind from the East
Leads forth the heavenly maiden choir;
Thou with the eyes beginnest to feast,
Sight is enough to glut desire.

They questioning stand: Thy enterprise?
Great plans? Strife, bloody, dangerous?
A hero, sure, since in our skies;
In what sort hero? answer us!

Thy wound soon tells the thing they sought,
Honour's memorial written plain;
Fortune and grandeur pass for nought,
Wounds for the faith alone remain.

To kiosk they lead and cool arcade,
Pillared with stones of rainbow light,
Sipping the cup, in smiles arrayed,
To juice of mystic grape they invite.

Youth! more than youth welcome thou art!
Each is as other air and fire;
One hast thou taken to thy heart,
Mistress and friend, she rules thy choir.

Yet not with pride her bosom swells
  Queening it since thy first caress;
Unconscious, candid, gay she tells
  Of all the others' worthiness.

One leads thee to the other's feast,
  Contrived by each in curious wise;
Thy wives are many, thy home is rest,
  Gains worth the strife for Paradise.

Accept the peace so granted thee;
  Exchange it canst thou ne'er again;
Such maids bring no satiety,
  Such wine can never mad the brain.

Here are set forth, though there's little to tell,
  The joys of which pious Moslems boast;
Here is their Paradise furbished well
  For the fighting men of the faithful host.*

III

ELECT WOMEN

WOMEN shall nothing lose; truth pure
  As theirs forbids despair;
And yet of only four we are sure,
  Already entered there.

* Some time between 2nd July 1814 and 10th March 1815.

Zuleika first, earth's sun, whose beams
Flamed upon Jussuf's eyes;
Renouncement's jewel now, she gleams
The joy of Paradise.

Next she, all blest, whose travail won
Salve for the heathen brood,
She who, deceived, bewept her son
Lost on the bitter rood.

Mohammed's spouse, his weal who wrought
And glory, a wife approved,
Who for our life this counsel brought—
" *One* God, *one* well-beloved."

Fatima last, the sweet, the fair,
Spouse, daughter, flawless-soul'd,
Pure spirit with her angelic air,
In body of honey-gold.

There do they dwell, and he whose praise
Of women shall touch the height,
Merits with these through endless days
To wander in delight.*

* An earlier form, 10th March 1815; this later form not before autumn 1815.

IV

Admission

Houri

To-day I stand, a warder true,
Before the gate of Paradise,
And scarce I know what I should do,
Thou comest in such a doubtful guise.

Art thou in very truth allied
To these our folk, the Moslem race?
What combats keen, what service tried,
Commend thee to this heavenly place?

With those heroic souls dost dare
To reckon thee? Thy wounds display!
For they will glorious things declare,
And I shall lead thee on thy way.

Poet

Why all this nice punctilio? What!
Promptly my right of entrance grant,
For I have been a man, and that
Means I have been a combatant.

Keen-visioned thou, but look more near
Traverse this breast with piercing sight;
Wounds of life's perfidy see here,
See here the wounds of love's delight!

And yet I sang in credulous wise
My love's pure faith inviolate,
And that the world, which whirls and flies,
Is gracious nor can be ingrate.

I wrought with men of rarest worth,
And this attained, that round my name
Love from the fairest hearts on earth
Shone like an aureole of flame.

No mean man hast thou chosen. Nay!
Give me thy hand, for I devise
On these slight fingers day by day
To reckon the eternities.*

V

HARMONY

Houri

YONDER, without, where I did wait
When speech to thee I first addressed,
Oft held I watch beside the gate,
Obedient to behest.

* 24th April 1820.

There a marvellous murmur my sense would fill,
A rippling sound and of syllable,
That fain would pass inside;
Yet no man could be spied;
Faint, fainter, still it grew, then died.
Almost as chime thy songs, its rise and fall;
That can I well recall.

Poet

Beloved for ever! with what tender care
Remembrance on thy lover is bestowed!
Those sounds that live upon the earthly air,
After the earthly mode.
They all would upward pass;
But many fail and fall, a ponderous mass;
Others impelled by the spirit's flight and race,
Like that winged courser which the Prophet bore,
Ascend and float before
The gate of Heaven.
To thy companions should like hap be given,
Let them in gracious wise attend it still,
And reinforce the echo with good will,
That it may sound below with charmèd call;
And let them give good heed,
What chance soe'er befall,
That, if he come indeed,
His gifts may every heart bestead,
So shall both worlds be vantagèd.

Theirs is it to reward him well;
Yielding with fond, compliant bent,
They grant him leave with them to dwell;
The good find soon their sweet content.
But mine thou art by Heaven's decrees,
Nor shalt thou pass from out the eternal peace;
To watch the gate no more be thy repair!
Nay, rather send a spouseless sister there.*

VI

POET

THY love, thy kiss enrapture me!
Secrets I may not ask, but tell
If in the life terrestrial
Thou ever hast had part.
Often the thought has come to haunt my heart,
Ay, I would swear, ay, I could prove the same,
Erewhile Zuleika was thy name.

HOURI

Straight from the elements are we fashioned,
From water and fire, from earth and air;
By the heavy breath of your terrene sphere
Our very essence is offended;

* Before 7th June 1820.

Never to you have we descended;
But when to your rest we welcome you,
Good sooth, we have enough to do!

For you must know, when the Faithful came
By the Prophet well accredited,
Their seats in Paradise to claim,
By us, whom his counsel wholly led,
Such gracious airs, such charms, were shown
As the angels of heaven had never known.

But from each that came, first, second, third,
Of some former favourite we heard,
Compared with Houris mere riff-raff,
Yet they were the wheat and we the chaff;
We were ravishing, spiituelle and gay,
But our Moslems would to the earth away.

Now to heaven's highborn, you will agree,
Such treatment needs must come amiss;
Conspirators sworn to mutiny,
We plotted that and we plotted this;
When swift through the heavens the Prophet races,
And we follow with eager eyes his traces;
On his homeward flight he would notice things,
And bring to a halt the horse with wings.

Yes: there in our midst he took his station,
And kindly grave in the prophet's fashion,
Spake precepts brief for the heavenly bride,
And left us but ill-satisfied;
For to compass the end that he approves,
We must be mere complacency,
As your thoughts were, so ours must be;
In a word we must grow your earthly loves.

Thus self-esteem clean disappears;
The damsels scratched behind their ears;
But it struck us that in the life unending
It is never correct to prove unbending.

So each man sees what he saw before,
And all that now happens happened of yore;
We are beauties brunette and beauties blond,
We have fancies nice and humours fond;
Yes, and often a spice of the rogue will come,
So that each man thinks he is still at home;
Maids merry and mad, it pleases us
That our dear deluded take it thus.

But you're of free humour; to your eyes
I come as a child of Paradise;
Although I were never Zuleika, you
To a glance and a kiss give honour due;
Yet since she was wholly sweet and fair,
She was sure my picture to a hair.

POET

Thou makest me blind with thy celestial light;
Be it the truth or but some juggling sleight,
Enough, that I admire thee past all measure!
To fail in nought that may with duty chime,
To raise to height a German poet's pleasure,
A Houri speaks in doggerel German rhyme!

HOURI

And rhyme you too, even as the verse shall rise
From out the soul, not harassed to invent;
To us, the associates of Paradise,
Grateful are words and deeds of pure intent;
Learn that even beasts find entrance to the skies,
If faithful proven and obedient;
A downright word to Houris is no blow;
We feel that what the full heart speaks,
What from a living source outbreaks,
In Paradise may flow.*

VII

HOURI

AGAIN thy finger's pressure! Canst thou say
How many an æon thou and I
Have dwelt together here in amity?

* Karlsbad, 10th May 1820.

POET

Nay, nor desire to know it, nay!
Manifold, ever new, our bliss,
The chaste, eternal, spouselike kiss!
When every moment thrills me with delight
How should I question of the centuries' flight?

HOURI

Yet wert thou absent once; I mind it well;
Measureless time, beyond all power to tell;
Nor didst thou quail while those far worlds were
trod,
But dared to probe the very deeps of God;
Now let thy best-belovèd be thy thought!
Some little song for her hast thou not brought?
How went the strain outside this heavenly place?
How goes it? Nay, I would not urge thee more,
Sing me the songs Zuleika heard of yore,
In Paradise thou couldst not add a grace.*

VIII

FAVOURED ANIMALS

PROMISE, of Paradise that spoke,
Four favoured beasts did hear;
And now with saints and pious folk
They live the eternal year.

* 1820 or later.

First comes an ass with lively tread;
She takes the place of honour,
For, to the City of Prophets led,
Rode Jesus mounted on her.

Sidles a wolf with timorous air,
Whom Mahomet schooled in duty:
" This poor man's sheep be sure you spare
The rich man's be your booty."

Brisk, brave, wagging his tail, now see,
With master brave, in heaven,
The little dog that faithfully
Slept with the Sleepers Seven.

Here purrs Abuherrira's cat
Round him, with coaxings bland;
A holy creature sure is that
Stroked by the Prophet's hand.*

IX

Higher and Highest

Quit me of pains and penalties
Although such things I teach! The whole
To interpret with illumined eyes,
Question the deeps of your own soul.

* 22nd February 1815.

So shall you learn that every man
Who is not with himself at strife,
All that he is would fain conserve
In heaven as in this lower life.

The self I cherish here should need
Easements and aids, no scanty store,
Delights, which here I drank with greed,
I fain would keep for evermore.

Fair gardens now our sense caress,
Flowers, fruits, a graceful girl or boy;
Here we all love them, there no less
The spirit made young in these will joy.

All friends once dear, the old, the young,
In one glad group I would comprise,
And gladly in the German tongue
Stammer the speech of Paradise.

Yet hear we dialects angels use
With men, when soft speech rippling flows,
And grammar of a rule abstruse,
Declining poppy, declining rose.

There, in a rhetoric of the eye,
The heart glad utterance shall have found,
Upraised to heights of ecstasy,
Without a tone; without a sound.

Yet tone and sound from words outbreak,
Self-understood, that so the spirit
Illumed more conscious joy may take
In boundless life it doth inherit.

And if our senses five obtain
In Paradise boon things that please,
Certain it is that I shall gain
A single sense for all of these.

Now far and wide with step elate
The endless circles may be trod,
Through whose expanse doth penetrate,
Living and pure, the Word of God.

Unchecked the glowing impulse plays,
Limitless life, a boundless flight,
Till on the Eternal Love at gaze,
Soaring, our spirits are lost to sight.*

X

The Seven Sleepers

Six young men, the palace favourites,
Fly before the Emperor's anger,
Who as God demanded reverence,
Yet unlike a God he bore him,
For a fly his pleasure thwarted
While he sat at table feasting.

* 23rd September 1818.

Fanning, the attendants vexed it,
Could not chase it from the chamber;
Still it buzzed and pricked and wandered,
Set the table in confusion,
Back returned, a very envoy
Of the god of flies malicious.

" What! "—so spake the youths together—
" One small fly a God discomfit!
Shall a God, as all the others,
Eat and drink? Nay, One and Only,
He who sun and moon created,
Who heaven's starry splendour vaulted,
He is God! We fly."—The tender
Youths light-sandalled, gaily-vested,
Found reception of a shepherd,
Who concealed them in a cavern,
With himself, their entertainer.
Nor his dog would quit the shepherd,
Chased away, his fore-foot broken,
Yet he pressed towards his master,
Joined them hidden in the cavern,
Joined the men beloved of Slumber.

Now the Prince they fled from; maddened
By love's fury, brooded vengeance.
Sword and fire he straight rejected,
In the hollow cave immured them,
Built them in with brick and mortar.

But they slept, nor ceased from sleeping.
Spake the Angel, their protector,
At God's throne their case reporting:
" Now on this side, now on that side,
Have I ever turned their bodies,
That the limbs, so young and lovely,
Be not marred by damps exhaling;
In the rock I rent a fissure,
That the sun arising, setting,
Might refresh the youthful faces;
So they lie and so are blessed.
Also, head on paws, healed wholly,
Rests the little dog in slumber."

Years flew past and years kept coming,
Till at length the young men wakened.
There the grey walls, slowly mouldering,
With the years had fallen in ruin.

Spake Jamblica, he the comely,
He of all the best instructed,
While in fear the shepherd tarried—
" I will go and fetch provision,
Life and this gold piece I venture."

Long time Ephesus in reverence
Held the teaching of the Prophet,
Jesus (Peace be with the Gracious!)

So he went; but all was altered,
Gates and bastions and watch-towers,
Yet in search of food he hastened,
Turned him to the nearest baker's.
" Rogue! hast thou," so cried the baker,
" Hast thou, young man, found a treasure?
See, this piece of gold betrays thee,
Give me half to hush the matter! "

So dispute arose. The business
Comes before the King; he also
Seeks a share as did the baker.

Now the miracle is proven
By a hundred gradual tokens.
To the palace he had builded.
Skilled he is his claim to stablish.
For a pillar, all-engraven,
Points to treasure that lies hidden.
Straight the family assembles,
Eager to make clear their kinship,
He, in flower of earliest manhood,
Shines as ancestor primeval,
Hears them name his sons and grandsons
As forefathers long remembered.
Round him stood remote descendants,
Valiant men, a tribe of heroes,
Venerating him, the youngest.

Fast on one proof crowds another
Till the truth stands sure and perfect;
And the identity is proven
Of himself and his companions.

Then returns he to the cavern,
King and people are his escort.
But to neither King nor people
Comes again the elect of heaven.
For the Seven, so many ages—
Eight, for let the dog be reckoned—
From the whole world held in severance
Hath the secret power of Gabriel,
To the will of God submissive,
Borne to Paradise for ever.
Walled before them seemed the cavern.*

XI

Good-night

Now, dear songs, go take your rest
Gently on my people's breast!
And in a musky incense-cloud
Be courteous Gabriel allowed
To tend the limbs of one sore spent,
That fresh and sound, and still intent
On social joys, as ever gay,
The fissures of the rock he may

* December 1814; revised May 1815.

Sunder, and with delighted eyes,
Heroes of every century
His comrades, roam broad Paradise,
Where beauty, ever springing new,
Waxes around him without end,
To glad a myriad; yea, and he
The little dog, companion true,
His master's footsteps may attend.*

* December 1814.

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